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Reaching Out: Advice and Information Networks Within a Middle School English Language Development Program

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Education

in

Educational Leadership

by

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The Dissertation of Jonathan Bernard Penuliar is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

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Chair

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DEDICATION

Para sa aking mga magulang.

Kapit-bisig tayo hanggang sa dulo ng walang hanggan.

(For my parents. Arm in arm, we are together forever.)

EPIGRAPH

Traditional Filipino Sayings…

Kapag may tiyaga, may nilaga.

(With perseverance comes beef soup)

Kung may tanim, may aanihin.

(If it is planted, it will be harvested)

Sunog kilay.

(Burn your eyebrows [while working by candlelight])

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Out of all the pages in this dissertation, this page was the most difficult to write. There have been so many people that have believed in me and supported me throughout my doctoral journey and the words here are not sufficient to express my deep gratitude for all of those who were there alongside me, in the ups and in the downs, who understood me when at times I did not understand myself, this page is dedicated to you.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Professor Megan Hopkins, Chair

English learners are one of the most rapidly growing student demographics in the United States. However, school systems have historically fallen short in providing English learners with adequate academic support. A review of the literature sheds light on academic tracking as a major factor in restricting access to the rigorous coursework English learners need to achieve at levels commensurate with their English-only speaking peers. Students

tracked into the English language development pipeline have difficulty exiting. Those who do not reclassify and persist in this track experience lower levels of high school graduation and college completion. Several recent shifts in educational policy are seeking to address this problem. New language and curriculum standards, as well as detracking practices, have given rise to a more distributed approach to teaching English learners where all teachers have a responsibility to support this population. Through an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, this study examined the social networks a school has built around teaching English learners and how those networks impact the flow of social capital used to support this demographic of students. Research questions include: 1. Who do educators turn to for advice and information regarding the education of English learners? 2. How do social networks shape opportunities for educators to build social capital around teaching English learners? The first phase collected survey data in order to highlight advice and information seeking behaviors. After social network analysis, the results from phase one informed phase two. The second phase included interviews from salient actors to provide further depth into creating a rich description of the ELD networks at the research site and how they impact the English learner experience.

Keywords: *Tracking, ELD Programs, English Learners, Social Capital, Social Networks*

Chapter One: Introduction

The procession was regal and grand, full of the pomp and circumstance compulsory for such events. My tassel dangled and my robe swayed as I made my way across the stage during the UC Santa Barbara Pilipino Graduate ceremony. At the end of the stage, I met my family where my father presented me with a stole that held in its seams a legacy being passed on from one generation to the next. These celebrations of achievement were not new to my mother and father. After all, they both walked down a similar stage at similar institutions of higher learning, finishing with degrees in science and commerce. Yet when opportunities arose for them to immigrate to the United States from their native Philippines, their new home failed to recognize their education as a satisfactory prerequisite for holding professional office. With their academic achievements essentially nullified, my father enlisted in the United States Navy and my mother found work at a motor machine supply shop located in downtown San Diego. Still, through sacrifice and determination they did everything in their power to invest in the realization of the academic recognition they never had. A Filipino flag sewn out of red, white, and blue cloth adorned with bright yellow stars, the stole draped around my neck was their American dream. I have had to overcome many scholastic, social, and cultural barriers throughout my educational trajectory in order to help my parents realize this dream, and this journey has instilled in me a lifelong commitment to investigate and discover ways to positively impact and build diverse communities through equitable education and practice.

The single most impactful barrier that has affected my life educationally, socially, and culturally is the pressure of assimilation. As the American son of Filipino immigrants, I felt a constant ebb and flow of two warring cultures and identities. For years I would spend hours

contemplating my split identity, the reality of never being accepted as wholly American or Filipino. It was not until I took an American literature course in college did I comprehend that I was not alone in feeling this cultural tug of war. It was not until I began reading W.E.B. DuBois' *The Souls of Black Folk* and learning his notion of double consciousness that my struggle and dual identity was validated. It was only then that I began to look at my identity from a constructive perspective rather than through the subtractive lens that was put before me as a direct result of the societal pressure to assimilate.

And yet through this assimilative pressure I learned to grow, undergoing a process that developed into a coming of age narrative set in the milieu of American exceptionalism; an exceptionalism not in the vein of nationalistic superiority, but rather a framework resembling the ideas found in Carlos Bulosan's *America Is in the Heart*. I began to recognize an America forged in the ideals of freedom for all citizens foreign born or domestic, an America that exchanges histories of bigotry for the fulfillment of a nation prophesied to truly welcome all with the open arms of liberty, dignity, and respect. Through my education I found purpose and began to cultivate a skill set that was built around culturally relevant and critical pedagogy. After finding confidence in my own identity, I entered the field of teaching and began to use my own life experiences as a foundation for creating rigorous curricula that aims to increase subject matter proficiency while also valuing and authenticating the various identities of students for coexistence readiness in a rapidly diversifying country and world. Teaching in this way allows me to work towards overcoming the subtractive elements of assimilation by endeavoring to nurture future generations and present them with opportunities to look deeply into a kaleidoscopic society in order to find truth in the paradox that there is unity and strength in diversity.

Every day, I am thankful for my roots. I come from engine repair shops and United States Ships. I come from Manila and National City. I come from a family that sacrificed everything they had to put me in a middle-class town so I would have a chance at attaining an education that has led me out of the shadows of cultural hegemony and into the sun rays of self-actualization, and I hope to build on the work of the scholars that went before me to help others succeed and have a positive impact on the diverse individuals and communities I have the privilege of working with now and in the future.

But all of this could have been different. Like a sailboat at the mercy of the wind, my course could have been changed forever. Access to college, deep learning about my own culture and the culture of others, teacher preparation, and graduate study could have all been jeopardized. Without a doubt, my road to educational attainment was hard, but it could have been made much harder due to the policies that shape the scholastic experiences of English learners. Because I was raised in a multilingual environment, I would have been asked to take a test that gauged my proficiency in English. If I did not pass, I would have been classified as a student needing English language support and quite possibly sent down a road that may have had a profound impact on both my cultural identity and educational experience from preschool to college.

My dissertation study was motivated by a desire to take a critical look at how English learner classification, and the school programming that is built around it, impacts educational attainment. To situate these ideas in historical context, I begin by discussing the current English learner experience as it relates to the history of discrimination in the United States that continues to exist today. After doing so, I introduce the research problem and provide the purpose and significance for my dissertation study proposed in this paper.

Then, in the second chapter, I frame English language development programs within the context of restricted educational access through a literature review of tracking practices and the academic outcomes of English learners. Shifts in educational policy and theoretical underpinnings that support studying social capital development through social networks will also be examined in chapter two. Finally, chapter three is dedicated to outlining the methodology of the dissertation study. It will provide a rationale for the need to utilize an explanatory sequential mixed methods design and explain how this is the best approach to answering the research questions.

Situating the Study in Historical Context

When it comes to social justice and equity, the United States has a checkered past. And among all of the social injustices evident throughout the nation's history, the American slave trade is one of the starkest examples of state-sponsored oppression. The first slave ship arrived in Virginia in 1619 marking the beginning of a two hundred and forty-six year enterprise of human trafficking (Kolchin, 2003). A booming slave-economy would follow and bring millions of purloined Africans to the North American continent. This prompted slave state legislatures to write laws that withheld rights from slaves. Distinguishing slaves as chattel in order to differentiate between humans and their property, these laws placed African slaves at the base and white slave owners at the pinnacle of a capitalist hierarchy (Morris, 1996). Though legal slavery in the United States would end with the ratification of the 13th Amendment to the constitution in 1865, echoes of slavery continue to haunt the nation decades after its abolition.

The reconstruction era following the Civil War brought into focus a deep and wide division between segregationists and supporters of integration. As a response to the 13th,

14th, and 15th Amendments that gave rights to people who were previously enslaved, southern states instituted statutes known as *Jim Crow laws* that continued to restrict freedoms from people of color. De jure segregation continued with *Plessy v. Ferguson*, a landmark court case that legalized the separation of public facilities based on skin color under the premise "separate but equal" in 1896. The decision would not be overturned until the supreme court unanimously passed *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954, a ruling that found "separate educational facilities [to be] inherently unequal." In spite of this law, segregation continues to persist in the United States.

At the macro level, many American communities remain divided along racial lines. Those in power have the ability to create contained urban areas known as "ghettos" by keeping people of color out of majority white communities through discriminatory lending and renting practices (Massey & Denton, 1993) as well as public policies such as Franklin D. Roosevelt's *New Deal* (Rothstein, 2014). Biased policies and practices that impact housing also have a profound impact on the ability for people of color to build wealth and attain a college education (Shapiro, Meschede, & Osoro, 2013). As such, schools are also divided as a consequence of the divisions evident in the communities in which they exist (DeSena & Ansalone, 2009).

In the United States, schools exist to meet the needs of an economy that upholds the wealthy elite (Bowles & Gintis, 1976). To meet the needs of those in power, school systems are able to control the provision and restriction of educational opportunities (Rosenbaum, 1976). The history of restrictive American education can trace its roots back to Southern Black Codes that kept slaves from learning to read or write in order to preserve slave owners' ability to control their property (Goodell, 1853; Woodson, 1919). This trend of oppression

continued with the Native American boarding school era during which Native American children were separated from their families and placed in segregated schools that forced them to learn manual or domestic labor skills (Child, 2016). Contrary to the *Brown* decision, segregation and inequality in schools continues to endure today even as the population and needs of the country become more and more diverse (Orfield, 2009; Orfield & Lee, 2005). The survival of this tradition is maintained by the disproportionate lack of resources and support available to de facto segregated schools that serve low-income students and students of color (Kozol, 1991; Kozol, 2005; Rothstein, 2004). If nothing is changed, polarized cycles of poverty and wealth will continue to be reproduced for the sole benefit of the powerful elite (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990).

Segregation and discrimination in American communities and schools is not only limited to race. People exist within multiple dimensions of identities and can experience oppression at any one of their dispositional intersections (Crenshaw, 1989). One such intersection is between culture and language. Culture and language are convoluted in such a way that makes it impossible to perceive each one without noticing the other (Brown, 1994). When teachers teach language, they also teach culture (Swiderski, 1993). Teaching language is also a political act as teachers of language espouse their own perspectives of power in society as well as their understanding of the ranking of its constituents (Prodromou, 1988). Historically, language education was used as a means to control minorities in a way that preserved power for the white population. Slaves were forbidden to speak their native languages and were isolated from their regional African compatriots (Fodde, 2002; Wong, 2000). During the Native American boarding school era, indigenous children were coerced into abandoning their cultural identities and native tongues to learn English in efforts to

prepare them to serve the needs of the white majority (Adams, 1995; Child, 2016; Churchill, 2004). These themes currently abide in schools today. Amidst the racial discrimination and segregation in American schools lies the marginalization of those who speak languages other than English (Gándara, Rumberger, Maxwell-Jolly, & Callahan, 2003; Liggett, 2010; Walker, Schafer, & Iiams, 2004). The aim of my dissertation study is to understand how educators organize to support English learners in ways that either attend to or exacerbate their marginalization.

Statement of the Problem

English learners (ELs) are one of the fastest growing student populations in the United States. The population of school-age children of immigrants is projected to increase from 12.3 million to 17.9 million between 2005 and 2020, and there is a strong likelihood that many of these children will be classified as ELs and need English Language Development (ELD) services (Fry, 2008). As the population of ELs continues to grow, academic achievement gaps and educational access issues with respect to ELs also continue to endure. With respect to educational attainment, only 59 percent of ELs graduated during the 2011-2012 school year as opposed to the national graduation rate of 80 percent for all high school students (Office of English Language Acquisition, 2015). Though the achievement of previously designated ELs shows some progress, little has changed in the 4th grade reading and 8th grade math achievement gap between ELs and non-ELs between 2000 and 2013 (Murphey, 2014). Furthermore, ELs experience constricted access to college preparatory coursework (Oakes, 2005; Callahan, 2005; Callahan & Shifrer, 2016, Kanno & Kangas, 2014) leading to low rates of postsecondary degree attainment (California Department of Education, 2013). Those who do go to college are often undermatched (Callahan & Humphries, 2016) and may receive

inadequate EL support and resources (Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates, 2006).

These challenges also give rise to a dilemma regarding equity and equality when it comes to educating ELs. Though often thought of as synonymous, equality and equity regarding educational opportunity refer to two different perspectives on how justice is achieved (Benadusi, 2002). Equality is the idea that every student has equal access to the same curriculum, academic resources, and quality teachers so that they may have an equal and fair chance to attain academic achievement (Coleman et al., 1966). However, this thought process assumes that all people have equivalent experiences, an assumption that fails to account for the rich diversity reflected in student populations (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004). Equity, on the other hand, can "be thought of as equality turned into an action, a process of making equal and fair" (Unterhalter, 2009, p.416). Rather than merely focusing on providing the same support and resources for every student, equity seeks to raise achievement by meeting the specific needs of each student (Singleton & Linton, 2006). Equity is a concept that "recognizes that the playing field is unequal and attempts to address the inequality" (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004, p.47).

Notions of equality and equity in EL education emerge when educational communities contemplate the type of ELD programming to implement in their schools. At the federal level, support for bilingual education has been provided or revoked depending on factors such as changing presidential administrations, global tensions, and legal precedents (Baker, 2011). In the past, some states have chosen to implement English-only programs. California passed Proposition 227 in 1998, Arizona passed Proposition 203 in 2000, and Massachusetts passed "Question 2" in 2002 (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010). Each of these laws challenged bilingual education programs by requiring ELs to be taught in English immersion models. Recently,

however, California repealed Proposition 227 by passing Proposition 58, a new law that provides increased options in teaching students in bilingual settings. Massachusetts's "Question 2" is also undergoing reconsideration as its state legislators are currently working on passing the Language Opportunity for Our Kids bill, a law similar to California's Proposition 58.

Legal matters often play a key role in defining avenues towards social justice through equity and equality. *Brown v. Board* (1954) of Education found that separate is inherently unequal. Thus, educating ELs in classrooms and programs separate from their non-EL peers creates an equality issue. However, because educating students in a language they do not understand creates unequal opportunities to learn, *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) takes a different stance. In this case, the court found that ELs have the right to additional language support outside of mainstream, English-Only classrooms. Influenced by Berlin's (1969) ideas on positive and negative liberty, as well as William's (2007) ideas on equality, Thompson (2013) produced a similar paradigm applicable to EL education that she calls positive and negative equality. Aligning with *Lau v. Nichols*, positive equality refers to how the EL educational experience can be made equal by treating ELs differently through providing additional supports and resources for students developing English proficiency. Conversely, negative equality is more similar to the *Brown v. Board* decision as it refers to achieving equality by treating all students in the same way. Either way, choosing an ELD model is difficult and involves weighing costs and benefits that affect EL students as well as the community at large. Still, "all students, including all racial and linguistic minorities, deserve [a] commitment to ensuring that a 'meaningful education' is open to them, despite the compromise, innovation, and experimentation that might be necessary to realize this goal"

(Thompson, 2013, p.1275).

Recent efforts to better prepare all students for college and career include the widespread implementation of Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Previously, content and ELD standards were separate entities that had little overlap. General education classes focused on teaching content and ELD classes focused on developing language. In this model, ELs were expected to learn English before learning grade-level academic content. However, given that the CCSS heighten attention to content-based language demands (Hakuta, Santos, & Fang, 2013), all content areas must now share responsibility for literacy and academic language development. Moreover, the most recent iteration of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the 2016 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), requires states to align their content and language proficiency standards. In California, efforts have been made to directly connect the CCSS with state ELD standards (California Department of Education, 2017). Instead of working as individuals under a hierarchical leadership structure with little interaction with others, these shifts give schools an opportunity to think about how they can distribute language and literacy instruction across content areas in ways that value and leverage each department's strengths and expertise (Rath & Conchie, 2008; Spillane, 2006).

While the CCSS aligns all academic content areas in requiring students to show critical reading and communication skills, it also increases the possibilities for interdisciplinary communication regarding better ways to teach English learners. Therefore, mapping and characterizing teachers' networks across core academic disciplines (English, Math, Social Studies, and Science) may provide important insights into which individuals or entities or types of relationships are most impactful in shaping the education of ELs. Several studies have examined information and advice seeking networks with respect to school

leadership (Pitts & Spillane, 2009; Spillane, Healey, & Kim, 2010; Spillane, Kim, & Frank, 2012), the diffusion of initiatives (Atteberry & Bryk, 2010; Frank, Zhao, & Borman, 2004), and how EL programming can support core academic instruction (Hopkins, Lowenhaupt, & Sweet, 2015). These studies serve as part of the foundation for the dissertation, which aims to fill a gap in the literature in the area of examining whether and how new educational initiatives have created opportunities for a diverse array of educators to support instructional equity for ELs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this project is: (1) to examine English learner-related communication and information networks among teachers, administrators, and instructional aides within schools, and (2) to identify the factors that facilitate communication about EL instruction among teachers, administrators, and instructional aides. Findings may guide the development of ELD programming at the research site. Additionally, the social network data might help identify novel ways to optimize social interactions within schools to improve both ELD programming and content instruction for all students in larger contexts.

To address these aims, the proposed study draws on two related constructs: Social Capital and Social Network Theory. Social network analysis (SNA) engages in the examination of the connections between individuals, the patterns of these connections, and the outcomes that result from the interactions between actors (Freeman, 2004). Through identifying and mapping these connections, SNA brings otherwise latent social structures to the surface by accounting for formal and informal networks (Cross, Borgatti, & Parker, 2002; Cross & Parker, 2004; Daly, Molenaar, Bolivar, & Burke, 2010). These interaction systems allow communities and organizations to build social capital, or the ability to work towards

goals by sharing information and resources through network connections (Bourdieu, 2011; Coleman, 1988; Lin, 2002; Putnam, 1993). Because students do better in environments with high levels of social capital (Goddard, 2003; Monkman, Ronald, & Theramene, 2005; Putnam, 2001), this study will focus on these research questions:

1. Who do educators turn to for advice and information regarding the education of English learners?
2. What factors facilitate communication about EL instruction among educators?

As detailed in Chapter 3, these questions will be addressed via an explanatory sequential mixed methods research design (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). This design incorporates both quantitative and qualitative components occurring in two separate phases. The first phase will gather quantitative data. Phase one will use an online survey to gather social network data. The networks will be mapped to identify who educators and administrators go to for advice and information regarding the education of ELs. These connections will then be analyzed alongside actors' demographic and characteristic data. Following the first phase, phase two of the study will seek to explain why people go to who they go to for advice and information, how these connections are fostered, and what the interactions entail. To do this, phase two will involve collecting qualitative data through semi-structured interviews based on the results from phase one. The interviews will be coded for recurring experiences, which will be sorted into broader themes that will be used to explain the results from phase one. Data from both phases will be analyzed together in the discussion section of the dissertation.

Chapter Two: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Overview

This chapter explores discrimination in schools with respect to ability, socioeconomic status, language, and culture. Specifically, it will examine how English learners (ELs) are placed in English language development (ELD) programs, the reasons for their placement, and potential consequences for ELs, schools, and more broadly the ever-diversifying communities that exist across the United States. The literature review begins with a survey of how ability grouping occurs in schools. Perspectives on both the benefits and disadvantages of ability grouping are compared, followed by a description of the efforts, progress, and opposition of a movement that works towards the dismantling of systems that group students by ability. The section on ability grouping provides a firm foundation for the English learner experience. A profile of ELD programs is also provided which reveals several challenges affecting students, teachers, and academic institutions. The impacts of these challenges on the educational trajectory of the EL demographic are highlighted before an outline of recent shifts in educational policy affecting ELs. The chapter then moves to a theoretical framework and research questions for the proposed study on social networks focused on examining the opportunities for educators to build social capital around teaching ELs. The concepts and themes delineated in the literature review will be synthesized in a way that provides a foundation for motivating the proposed study at the conclusion of the chapter.

Tracking in Schools

Definition of tracking. In general, educational tracking is the practice of separating students into different instructional environments. This process may also be referred to as "ability grouping" or "curriculum tracking" (Gamoran, 1992). Though these terms are closely

related, and at times used reciprocally, some scholars highlight key nuances that set them apart. These nuances include the scale at which the groupings occur as well as the level of education at which they exist.

Curriculum tracking exists more prevalently in secondary schools and describes the grouping of students across courses that vary in degree of rigor whereas ability grouping is more common at the elementary level and focuses on the small group differentiation that occurs within heterogeneous classes (Levy, 2008; Loveless, 2013; McPartland, Coldiron, & Braddock, 1987). Curriculum tracking, however, may also be referred to as homogeneous ability grouping when students are split between classes based on academic performance (Kulik & Kulik, 1982; Slavin, 1990). Given the polysemic qualities of these terms, it is necessary to clarify that the definitions of tracking and ability grouping employed in this review will describe educational systems that homogeneously group students between classes.

Benefits of tracking. Proponents of tracking contend that homogeneous ability grouping leads to positive educational and socioemotional outcomes for students at all levels (Collins & Gan, 2013; Kulik 1985; Kulik & Kulik, 1992). Remarkable gains in achievement predominantly affect students who are identified as gifted and talented learners (Kulik & Kulik, 1987). Gifted and talented education (GATE) students are identified by professionals as having exceptional intellectual ability and may need academic support beyond what is available in the regular classroom (Marland, 1971). The need for tracking is supported by evidence that shows how younger gifted students are able to successfully manage and excel in accelerated settings among older peers (Kulik & Kulik, 1984). Supporters of tracking suggest that ability grouping affords high-ability learners with greater opportunities to progress.

Advocates of tracking also claim that ability grouping positively affects the academic achievement of low-level learners. If schools consider students' past academic performance as a factor when creating ability groups, students can be tracked into classes that allow their teachers to provide them with instruction that is better tailored to meet their specific scholastic needs (Collins & Gan, 2013). Teachers see tracking as effective and efficient as they are better able to bolster achievement when instruction is matched with student ability in homogenous settings (Hallinan, 2003). Furthermore, schools that retain reputable accelerated tracks may draw increased funding and higher quality teachers which may result in indirect academic benefits for lower level students (Figlio & Page, 2002). Consequently, supporters of tracking contend that ability grouping can support students in a way that encompasses the range of ability levels.

In addition to educational advantages, tracking supporters assert that ability grouping has positive socioemotional effects. Supporters suggest that tracking leads to stronger friendships (Hallinan & Sorensen, 1985; Kubitschek & Hallinan, 1998), better relationships with teachers and a higher interest in school for high-ability students (Vogl & Preckel, 2014), and possible increases in the self-esteem of low-level learners (Kulik, 1985). Advocates also argue against earlier research (Schafer & Polk, 1967) that links delinquency to lower tracks and contend that previous behavior is a much stronger predictor of delinquency than track placement (Wiatrowski, Hansell, & Massey, 1982). While this section of the literature reinforces a lens that views tracking as an essential component of educational systems, there is a much larger body of work that holds a contradictory perspective.

Disadvantages of tracking. Arguably the most influential work on tracking and its negative effects on students and society is Jeannie Oakes's *Keeping Track* (1985). In this

seminal work, Oakes reveals how tracking in schools systematically recreates societal injustices and stratification. Key findings suggest that schools' internal processes can ultimately lead to inequitable educational outcomes for low income, students of color. Since the initial publication of *Keeping Track*, the body of tracking literature has continued to grow and provides sustained support that sheds light on the disadvantages of tracking.

Rather than finding opportunity, students in lower tracks experience several obstacles to academic success. As a fundamental learning framework, Lev Vygotsky's (1978) *Zone of Proximal Development* outlines the increased potential for a student to learn in collaboration with more advanced peers. Also known as the peer effect, this phenomenon disappears when students are separated into high and low tracks (Reilly & Mitchell, 2010; Zimmer, 2003). Additionally, students placed in low tracks have been found to have lower self-esteem, higher levels of discouragement, and lower ambitions than students in higher tracks (Alba & Lavin, 1981; George, 1988; Muller & Hoffman, 2016). Low track students have also been found to exert less effort than their higher tracked counterparts (Carbonaro, 2005) and are more likely to drop out of school (Ansalone, 2002; Werblow, Urick, & Duesbery, 2013).

Tracking plays a primary role in linking race, social class, and academic achievement (Lee & Bryk, 1988). White and Asian students have disproportionate access to college preparatory tracks over Latino and African American students (Oakes, 1995; Oakes & Guiton, 1995). Tracking has also been found to be a possible contributor to social status maintenance for the middle and upper class as students that carry this socioeconomic status are often tracked into more favorable learning environments leading to higher overall status attainment (Vanfossen, Jones & Spade, 1987). While tracking has many effects, including positive outcomes for some groups, its strongest negative impact is on low income, minority

populations as it widens the achievement gap between high and low socioeconomic status students (Alexander, Cook, & McDill, 1978, Braddock & Dawkins, 1993; Gamoran & Mare, 1989).

The achievement gap focuses on student scores and performance rather than educational resources and support structures. Through tracking, it is clear that some students receive more favorable resources over others. This preference is especially true for those who come from communities that hold power in society (Oakes, 1982). The inequitable distribution of resources and opportunities continues to perpetuate the historic cycle of segregation, discrimination, and restriction of opportunity for low income, minority communities (Ansalone, 2001; DeSena & Ansalone, 2009; Oakes, 1987). Thus, the achievement gap may be explained by the "receivement gap", a term that describes how low income, students of color receive little benefit from a system that restricts the allocation of educational opportunity (Chambers, 2009).

Detracking. As a response to the effects of tracking, the detracking movement seeks to replace tracked systems with mixed-ability educational environments (Oakes, Wells, Jones, & Datnow, 1997). In light of the harmful impact educational programs can have on historically marginalized communities, the federal government issued Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to ensure equal educational opportunities for all students. Within this legislation are sections that outline specific bans on discrimination through tracking in schools. Still, there is much debate around the necessity and effectiveness of tracking in schools (Loveless, 1998; Loveless, 2009).

One of the major goals of detracking is to produce more equitable learning environments for all students. However, detracking may have an opposite effect and continue

to perpetuate the inequality it aims to abolish (Rubin, 2003). Some opponents of detracking believe that removing ability grouping would decrease equity for gifted students, effectively diverting them from excellence and leading them towards lower achievement (Benbow & Stanley, 1996; Fiedler, Lange, & Winebrenner, 2002). These perspectives view detracking as having the potential to be just as inequitable as tracking. Rather than removing tracking altogether, some scholars suggest that tracking can be modified and tuned to decrease inequity and support the academic needs for all students (Feldhusen & Moon, 1992; Hallinan, 1994; Tieso, 2003).

The opposite argument suggests that there is no merit in working to improve tracking as it is an inequitable practice in and of itself (Oakes, 1994). Effective models of detracked systems have been restructured at the site and district levels and expose students to rigorous and supportive classroom communities (Rubin, 2006; Yonezawa,Wells, & Serna, 2002). When students are provided with rigorous, detracked learning opportunities and high expectations, they have the ability to achieve greater learning outcomes (Burris, Wiley, Welner, & Murphy, 2008). Supporters of detracking believe that though detracking is an arduous endeavor, teachers and schools have the ability to effectively teach all students (Braddock and Slavin, 1992; LaPrade, 2011).

Some of the biggest challenges to the progress of detracking reform come from the outside community and parents of high aptitude students. Having been beneficiaries of tracking in the past, these parents work to reproduce the same outcomes for their children and echo the perspectives of the scholars who support tracking and believe that placing high track students in heterogeneous classes would inhibit their ability to succeed at a pace commensurate with their ability (Ansalone & Biafora, 2010; Wells & Serna, 1996). Insular

social beliefs and community politics also inhibit the implementation of detracking as some communities resist integration in order to preserve historical power structures (Oakes, Wells, Jones, & Datnow, 1997). In order to combat this resistance, detracking supporters either attempt to convince community members to change their beliefs or actively push back against the resistance (Welner & Burris, 2006).

One salient group that has been and continues to be negatively affected by tracked educational systems is the English learner demographic (Robinson-Cimpian, Thompson, & Umansky, 2016). Consequently, this population of students may find significant benefits from detracking (Boaler, 2006; Cone, 2006; Gold & Maxwell-Jolly, 2006). The following section will unfold the problems the proposed study seeks to address by outlining the English learner experience through an examination of tracked language development programming and its impact on academic achievement.

English Learners

Terms and definitions. Educational institutions in the United States may employ several terms when referring to students who speak another language and are at the early stages of developing English language proficiency. These terms include English Language Learner (ELL), English learner (EL), English as a Second Language (ESL), limited English proficient (LEP), and emergent bilingual (California Department of Education, 2016; Garcia, Kleifgen, & Falchi, 2008; National Council for Teachers of English, 2008). While all of these terms describe students from the same population, they each carry a connotation that promotes either an additive or deficit outlook towards promoting multilingualism. The terms ELL, EL, and LEP may be problematic because they describe developing learners through a lens that endorses nativism and diminishes the worth of linguistic and cultural diversity

(Linse, 2013). Though ESL may project a more additive tone on its veneer, it does not accurately capture the experience of students as they progress through English development and continues to serve as a marker for linguistic deficiency; the term ESL is still associated with low-level ability and the need for additional support even if a student has achieved mastery of English in addition to another language (Ortmeier-Hooper, 2008).

On the other hand, a movement to revise this terminology in a way that recognizes the value of multilingualism has begun. While some scholars use the term "English as an Additional Language" (EAL) as a label that is equivalent to ELL or ESL (Arnot et al., 2014; British Council, 2016; Strand, Malmberg, & Hall, 2015), others use it to communicate the supplementary nature of learning another language (Manitoba Education, n.d.). The term Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD or CALD) affirms the strong connection between language and culture (Gonzalez, Pagan, Wendell, & Love, 2011; Tangen & Mergler, 2008). The term "emergent bilingual" holds an optimistic perspective that supports the equitable education and development of multilingual individuals (Garcia, Kleifgen, & Falchi, 2008).

Given these labels, and the connotations they possess, it would be proper for this paper to employ descriptors that align with the values of equity and progress. However, it is also necessary to acknowledge the present liminality in which these terms exist. Considering that much of the literature, as well as federal policy (Lhamon & Gupta, 2015), continues to use EL as the term for referring to culturally and linguistically diverse students, it will also be the term used to describe this demographic throughout the remainder of this review.

Demographics and population growth. The population of ELs is growing at a rapid rate in the United States. Between 1997 and 2008, the United States saw a 53.2 percent increase in the overall population of students designated as ELs (Batalova & McHugh, 2010).

In the states of Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, South Carolina, and West Virginia, the population of ELs increased by over 100 percent between 2004 and 2012; the rate was over 200 percent for Massachusetts during the same time period (Office of English Language Acquisition, 2015). In 2012, ELs represented 9.8 percent of all K-12 students enrolled nationally with California having the highest EL student population out of all states with 24.5 percent of all students designated as ELs (Ruiz Soto, Hooker & Batalova, 2015).

Because immigration plays a key role in the EL experience, ELs may be categorized by their immigrant generation. Second generation students are either American-born children of immigrants or were infants at the time they arrived to the United States (Portes & Zhou, 1993). When referring to immigrants who arrive to the United States as children, some scholars use the term "generation 1.5" seeking to capture the diverse experiences and fluid identities of students who may find themselves somewhere between newcomer and native status (Benesch, 2008; Roberge, 2002). While immigration is a strong contributor to this student population, immigrant students only account for a fraction of the entire EL demographic. Over half of the EL population is comprised of second and third generation students who have only been educated in the United States (Batalova, Fix & Murray, 2007; Zong & Batalova, 2015).

English Language Development programs. English Language Development (ELD) programs continue to be an issue for heated debate, chiefly between proponents of English-only programs and supporters of bilingual education (Brisk, 2006; Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011; Crawford, 2004). Currently, ELD programs must pass what is known as the "Castañeda Standard" before being adopted by a school (Lhamon & Gupta, 2015). The Castañeda Standard is a result of *Castañeda v. Pickard*, a court case which determined that

schools must take measures to assist ELs in surmounting obstacles that prevent them from participating equally in school. To be approved, the Castañeda Standard requires programs to be: (1) based on sound educational theory, (2) implemented with adequate resources, and (3) evaluated and proven effective (Del Valle, 2003).

English-only programs. English-only models may be referred to as either ELD or ESL programs and may appear in various forms. One form of ESL is structured English immersion or sheltered English instruction (SEI). In SEI programs, ELs are separated from the fluent English-speaking population and grouped into classes that contain only other ELs (Freeman & Freeman, 1988). Another form of ESL is known as mainstreaming where ELs are placed in regular academic-content classes with the general population of fluent English-speaking students. Students in mainstreamed classrooms may have been recently exited from SEI classrooms, currently in SEI models for a portion of the school day, or receive all ESL instruction through a mainstream classroom (Carrasquillo & Rodriguez, 2002). Students in mainstream classrooms may also receive SEI support through "pull-out" classes that provide additional language lessons for only linguistic minority students (Honigsfeld, 2009). Mainstream classrooms that include ELs deliver what is known as specifically designed academic instruction in English (SDAIE), a term that describes teaching practices and curriculum that provides grade-level academic instruction tailored to the needs of linguistic minority students (Genzuk, 2011).

Bilingual programs. Bilingual programs differ from English-only programs in that they provide a portion of instruction in a language other than English. Bilingual programs commonly appear in three main forms: two-way, transitional, and maintenance (Baker, 2011). Also known as dual language education, two-way programs seek to enroll equivalent numbers

of linguistic minority and English-speaking students in hopes of each student achieving high levels of proficiency in both languages as well as academic content (Lindholm-Leary, 2001). Transitional programs, also known as early-exit bilingual education, aim to provide native language support for linguistic minority students only until their level of English proficiency is sufficient for success in English-only classrooms (Genesee, 1999; Ramirez, 1992). Maintenance programs seek to preserve bilingualism and biliteracy in students to promote cultural pluralism (Brisk, 2006; Roberts, 1995).

Challenges to program selection. Due to the immense diversity of American communities, the U.S. Department of Education and Center on Instruction suggest that schools consult empirical research and consider family dynamics, characteristics of instructional models, and develop an awareness of community, cultural, and socio-political climate to guide the selection process to further ensure that student needs are met (Moughamian, Rivera, & Francis, 2009). While working towards building native fluency within the EL population, schools are also urged to evaluate the linguistic and content readiness of individual students as well as to consider access to instructional resources, appropriately credentialed staff, and availability of sufficient funding in order to select the program most appropriate for the student demographic and surrounding community (McKeon, 1987; Rennie, 1993; Stufft & Brogadir, 2011).

The notion that there is not a single best program is best reflected in the inconsistencies between several widely cited meta-analyses in the existing literature regarding program effectiveness. Rossell and Baker (1996) are often cited for finding that English-only models are no less effective in teaching ELs when compared to transitional bilingual programs. Similarly, Baker and de Kanter (1981) are cited extensively for their conclusion

that there is little significant support for the need for bilingual models as English-only programs with modified curricula are sufficient for the educational progress of ELs. However, many scholars also cite Willig's (1985) revisitation of Baker and de Kanter's (1981) meta-analysis, a reproduction that employed alternative methodology to find bilingual education as having a more positive impact on student outcomes. Additional meta-analyses support the benefits of bilingual education by concluding that with the exception of math, bilingual programs are effective in raising standardized examination results delivered in English (Greene, 1998) and can be far superior to English-only programs which can cause gaps in second language achievement (Thomas and Collier, 2002). Taken as a whole, these meta-analyses provide conflicting conclusions and do not adequately provide schools with strong evidence to support any particular ELD program. However, while some of the most recent research suggests that bilingual programs are superior to English-only models, English-only models are currently more prevalent due to a lack of bilingual educators as well as restrictive government policies that make it difficult for school systems to make use of available resources (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010; McField, 2014). Still, regardless of the ELD approach, the Castañeda Standard does not directly address the potentially problematic effects of tracking on EL education.

Teacher preparation. In order to realize academic and social success for the future and meet the requirements set forth by educational standards that seek to prepare students for college and career, ELs require sound linguistic instruction (Bunch, 2013; Kibler, Walqui, & Bunch, 2015). Teachers who undergo specific preparation for working with ELs show the highest success in positively affecting EL achievement (Hayes & Salazar, 2001, Lopez, Scanlan, & Gundrum, 2013). Rather than exclusively focusing on language development, the

literature also outlines the specialized cultural knowledge needed to be an effective teacher of ELs. ESL teacher candidates should have a deep understanding of the interdependent relationship between language and identity, an ideology that seeks to challenge historical practices that view multilingual populations from deficit perspectives, and a willingness to strategically leverage the unique cultural and linguistic capital of students in ways that develop both cultural and linguistic pluralism (Rios and van Olphen, 2011). Properly prepared mainstream teachers of ELs are those that create spaces where there is reciprocal respect for multiple cultures, environments that seek to narrow the divide between students' cultures and the dominant culture espoused at the school site (Carrasquillo and Rodríguez, 2002).

Although ELs need well-prepared teachers in order to succeed, teachers may not have the support, resources, or professional development opportunities to meet the needs of this population (Gándara, Maxwell-Jolly, & Driscoll, 2005; Murri, Markos, & Estrella-Silva, 2012). While the federal government supports EL training for all teachers and requires that districts provide empirically sound professional development for teachers who work directly with ELs, 64% of states have no training requirement for general education teachers (Education Commission, 2014; Meskill, 2015). Furthermore, the schools who have the most ELs also have the most underprepared teachers (Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning, 2008; Dabach, 2015). Teachers without research-based, EL-specific training are left to struggle and learn on the job (Clair, 1995). This study will endeavor to gain insight into "learning on the job" experiences through examining network interactions. These learning interactions occur through the transfer of knowledge between peers, and the proposed study will look into the formal and informal networks that emerge as a result of advice and information seeking behavior regarding EL education.

Marginalization in schools. Despite the detrimental effects of tracking, teachers generally want their students to succeed in school and many see tracking as the best option for students to achieve this goal (Oakes, 1987). Teachers of ELs also typically do their best to improve student learning without blaming students or their families for substandard performance (Gándara, Maxwell-Jolly, & Driscoll, 2005). Regardless of these sentiments, ability grouping and EL designation continues to allow for the pervasive marginalization of EL students, their teachers, and ELD programs in schools.

Umansky (2016a) outlines three dimensions of tracking ELs, as well as several reasons for how tracking and EL classification may impact the ability for ELs to access rigorous coursework. The three dimensions of tracking include which classes ELs take (*Educational Tracking*), the rigor of those classes (*Leveled Tracking*), and the inability to access certain classes (*Exclusionary Tracking*). Umanksy (2016a) suggests that ELs are subject to these types of tracking due to prior scholastic performance, ability to speak English, inadequate school resources, and classification as an EL. These factors can promote educational inequality as ELs experience limited access to the same coursework as their non-EL classified peers (Umansky, 2016a).

Throughout the school day, ELs may attend all mainstream classes or a blend of both English-only and ESL classes. Regardless of program, schools and teachers have a shared responsibility in meeting the needs of ELs (Bunch, Kibler, Pimentel, 2012; English, 2009). Even though collaboration between general education and ESL teachers has been lauded as a best practice (Bahamonde & Friend, 1999; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010; McClure & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2010), collaboration is not guaranteed. Teacher collaboration between ESL and mainstream staff is most successful when it is supported by school administration and if

mainstream teachers are prepared and have positive attitudes towards collaboration (Bell & Baecher, 2012). However, some mainstream content teachers feel that the responsibility of teaching ELs falls solely on the shoulders of ESL teachers, a belief that leads to low levels of collaboration and the deliberate exclusion of ELs from some classroom activities (Haneda & Nespor, 2013). Along the same lines, some content area teachers do not view themselves as teachers of EL students even though the majority of students enrolled in their schools are ELs (Hamann, 2008).

These divisions are also evident in school culture. Students and staff may view ESL teachers as having a lower status compared to mainstream teachers (Creese, 2002). Some schools may also have an unequal power relationship between general education and ESL teachers where general education teachers have the ultimate authority in employing or denying instructional advice which makes for potentially frustrating situations for ESL teachers (Arkoudis, 2006). ESL teachers may also be affected by social and physical marginalization as ESL classrooms are often situated in remote areas of the school site and excluded from the tight-knit connections between general education departments (Gándara, Rumberger, Maxwell-Jolly, & Callahan, 2003; Liggett, 2010). Some schools have gone as far as allowing the cultivation of racist perspectives towards ELs (Walker, Schafer, & Iiams, 2004).

Educational trajectory and achievement gap. Tracking, inadequate teacher preparation, restrictive language policies, and program marginalization have a profound effect on student achievement. In large measure, ELs experience less than favorable outcomes compared to their English-fluent peers in both ELD and mainstream educational settings. When ELs succeed academically, it is more likely to be questioned as compared to the

achievement of non-ELs (Riley, 2015). Even when teachers have good intentions, ELs are subjected to lower expectations (Verplaetse, 1998). While class placement has been found to be a more reliable predictor of academic success than language proficiency, low expectations of ELs lead to disproportionate placement in non-college preparatory coursework (Callahan, 2005; Parrish et al., 2006). The following section will outline the process for tracking ELs, common educational trajectories for the population, and the achievement gap between ELs and students identified as English proficient.

The path to EL designation begins with the home language survey. In order to register for public school, parents of students who speak any language other than English in the home are required to provide information that identifies the language other than English and its frequency of use on a home language survey form. Having been identified, these students are tested using a state-approved language assessment. Students who do not initially pass the assessment are placed in an ELD program. Once a student enters an ELD program, it is a difficult path to exit. In some school districts, it can take up to eight years to attain reclassification (Umansky & Reardon, 2014). Students who remain in ELD programs for six years or longer become known as Long Term English Language Learners (LTEL) and experience particular hardship in progressing academically (Olsen, 2014). LTELs account for the majority of ELs in California. Across all districts, 59% of ELs are considered LTELs with one out of every three districts having populations of LTELs that account for at least 75% of their entire EL demographic (Olsen, 2010).

It is crucial for ELs to attain reclassification by the upper elementary grades to avoid LTEL status or the risk of never achieving reclassification at all (Thompson, 2015; Thompson, 2017a). Students who do not exit ELD programs by the end of middle school may

be placed in a program of study that extends high school beyond the four years normally needed to receive a diploma. EL students who enter the ninth grade with low levels of English proficiency may be placed in a track that takes five years to reach graduation (Los Angeles Unified School District, 2012; San Diego Unified School District, 2016). While some EL coursework fulfills college admission requirements, EL students often lack the rigorous course schedule and grade point average (GPA) needed to attain admission into postsecondary institutions. Students classified as ELs report lower average test scores in English and math between the second and tenth grades (Umansky, 2016b). According to the Nation's Report Card (2009), ELs achieve an average GPA of 2.75 compared to 3.0 for non-ELs. Furthermore, EL students have limited access to the advanced coursework favored by many universities (Callahan, 2005; Callahan and Shifrer, 2016; Callahan, Wilkinson, & Muller, 2010; Kanno & Kangas, 2014; Thompson, 2017b). During the 2011-2012 school year, the U.S. Department of Education found that non-ELs were enrolled in advanced placement courses and Gifted and Talented Education programs at rates that were two and a half times and three and a half times greater than that of ELs respectively (Office of English Language Acquisition, 2015).

With respect to educational attainment, only 59 percent of ELs graduated during the 2011-2012 school year as opposed to the national graduation rate of 80 percent for all high school students (Office of English Language Acquisition, 2015). In addition to low graduation percentages, ELs also show low rates of college attendance. Some of the most salient evidence comes from the state of California. During the 2006-2007 school year, 48.5 percent of all EL high school graduates in the state were enrolled in California postsecondary institutions and only 22.4 percent completed one year of college credit in two years of enrollment (California Department of Education, 2013). Within California, Los Angeles

enrolls the highest population of ELs (Ruiz, Soto, & Batalova, 2015). In the same year, 52.9 percent of Los Angeles County EL high school graduates were enrolled in postsecondary institutions in California and only 19.4 percent completed one year of college credit in two years of enrollment (California Department of Education, 2013). These low rates of completion may be a result of inadequate support. Postsecondary institutions across the California Community College, California State University, and University of California systems report that the majority of available language support courses do not meet the needs of ELs and that additional courses and sections are required (Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates, 2006). Furthermore, highly qualified EL students that do pursue postsecondary education are often undermatched and choose to attend schools that are not congruent with their academic preparedness (Callahan & Humphries, 2016). Such dire outcomes undergird the motivation for the proposed study.

Shifts in educational policy. Several recent shifts in educational policy introduce uncharted territories regarding the study of tracking and its effects on the EL experience. The current system for identifying and testing ELs leads to remediation, tracking, and subsequently restricted access to postsecondary academic opportunities. While the home language survey will still be used to identify students who live in multilingual households for testing, California's CELDT test will be replaced by the English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC) with full implementation beginning in 2018. A key difference between the ELPAC and the CELDT is that there will be two tests administered instead of one. In the current CELDT format, students are given the same test for identification for the need of English support and for gauging level of proficiency. The new

ELPAC format will have an initial test dedicated to identification for the need of support and a separate test to track progress towards proficiency.

Moreover, the ELPAC test will be aligned with the new ELD standards. Developed in 2012, the new ELD standards outline several changes from the previous standards including new proficiency level indicators and a shift from focusing on language acquisition before building content proficiency to supporting both content and language development simultaneously. The new standards also include a specific domain for collaboration with other students, an area that may support implementation in classrooms comprised of students with varying levels of proficiency. The new ELD standards align with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) that were introduced in 2009.

Since then California and forty-one other states have adopted the CCSS with the goal of implementing standardized learning objectives to improve college and career readiness for all students around the country (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2017). A key component of the CCSS is its focus on shared responsibility for literacy across all content areas. This is evidenced by the CCSS's emphasis on asking students to justify their written and verbal answers using evidence and academic language as a key tool to check for understanding in math, English language arts (ELA), and history (Common Core State Standards, 2017). Though the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) are separate from the CCSS, they too are aligned with the philosophy of the math and ELA CCSS as they require students to be able to develop, communicate, and defend sound arguments through reading and writing in order to prepare them for the scientific challenges of the real world (National Science Teachers Association, 2014). Through the CCSS model, responsibility for

student literacy permeates throughout all academic departments instead of being housed solely in the English classroom.

This shared responsibility also includes the education of ELs as ELD in California is clearly outlined as a comprehensive approach in the *English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework for California Public Schools* (California Department of Education, 2015). While providing ELs with access to rigorous coursework is important, it is not enough to support academic achievement and needs to be supplemented with specific instruction that addresses students' individual linguistic needs (Thompson, 2017b). According to the framework, along with teaching literacy in every content area classroom all general education teachers have the responsibility to teach integrated ELD in addition to any designated ELD classes EL students may be taking. To support ELs in every subject area, the framework requires that all teachers integrate the use of ELD standards with their respective content standards. However, the document also recognizes the challenges of this undertaking and acknowledges that:

> Such a multilayered application of the CA ELD Standards requires deep collaboration among educators, support for teachers, and, most importantly, a sustained focus on the strengths and needs of individual ELs and a persistent belief that all ELs can achieve the highest levels of academic and linguistic excellence. (p. 119)

These recent shifts in policy have the potential to impact the EL population in positive ways. Nevertheless, educational institutions must ensure the effective implementation of such reforms if these positive effects are to be realized. In order to achieve this goal, school leaders will need to successfully bolster the organizational change needed to move from the past into the future.

Both the CCSS and the new ELD standards are supported by extensive empirical research (Conley, 2014; Ong, McLean, & Gonzalez, 2014). However, transferring theory into practice can be challenging. Education scholars have used the term "knowledge mobilization" to describe the trajectory of ideas beginning at the research stage up until the implementation of policies and practices (Levin, Cooper, Arjomand, & Thompson, 2011; Qi & Levin, 2011; Fenwick & Farrell, 2011). Through this process, social networks have been found to play an integral role in moving theory into praxis (Briscoe, Pollock, Campbell, & Carr-Harris, 2015). Additional influential perspectives emerge from organizational ecology, an area of research that studies the dynamic creation, evolution, and death of organizations through the environments in which they exist (Hannan & Freeman, 1977; Hannan & Freeman, 1993). As organisms themselves, organizations rely on complex networks and diverse environments in order to thrive (Morgan, 2006). Because these concepts have not been applied to the educational milieu that affects ELs in light of recent reforms, it is necessary to fill these gaps by investigating the role of social networks in supporting organizational change (Daly, 2010; Fenwick & Edwards, 2010).

Social Capital Theory

Social capital is a concept that has piqued the interest of many scholars from a wide range of disciplines (Portes, 1998). Along with an extensive body of research, interest from many scholars has also resulted in many definitions of social capital. However, the leading voices agree that social capital refers to the idea that communities can leverage social interactions in order to produce desired outcomes (Bourdieu, 2011; Coleman, 1988; Lin, 2002; Putnam, 1993). Such outcomes are realized through network connections that promote the circulation of information and provide support and resources between actors (Boxman, De

Graaf, & Flap, 1991; Lin, 1999). When schools have more connected social networks, they have more opportunities to build social capital.

As a result, children do better in environments with higher levels of social capital (Putnam, 2001). Students in schools with high levels of social capital may score higher on standardized assessments (Goddard, 2003). Teachers with rich social capital can better help students in both urban and wealthy contexts (Monkman, Ronald, & Theramene, 2005). Human capital refers to what an individual knows and is able to do (Becker, 1994), and when human capital and social capital develop together, there is a strong effect on student achievement (Daly, Moolenaar, Der-Martirosian, Canrinus, & Chrispeels, 2011). Bolstering human capital and social capital is also important in the development of intellectual capital, "the knowledge and knowing capability of a social collectivity, such as an organization, intellectual community, or professional practice" (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998, p. 248). Because perspectives change when actors are able to share information (Mullen & Kochan, 2000), innovative policies and new knowledge can spread more effectively when the development of social capital is increased (Bolivar & Chrispeels, 2010; Daly & Finnigan, 2011). Examining how schools organize to build social capital around ELs is of particular import to this dissertation given the history of EL programming and the current shifts in education policy regarding ELs.

Social Network Theory

In the social science arena, social network analysis (SNA) focuses on the idea that "individuals are embedded in thick webs of social relations and interactions" (Borgatti, Mehra, Brass, & Labianca, 2009). SNA is a research approach that involves examining structures that outline the links between social actors as well as the patterns and conditions

that contribute to consequences that arise as a result of those connections (Freeman, 2004). Furthermore, SNA acknowledges that actors and their behaviors are interdependently connected within networks, networks foster the sharing of resources, networks can support or inhibit actors' actions, and network structures can be conceptualized as relational patterns (Wasserman & Faust, 1994).

While many organizations show connections between members through organizational charts that outline a formal leadership hierarchy, informal structures also exist that may provide more authentic insights into connections between actors and identify both formal and informal leaders (Cross & Parker, 2004). Education systems also use organizational charts to delineate formal organizational structure (i.e. Los Angeles Unified School District, 2017; NYC Department of Education, 2017). Additionally, school systems can have networks comprised of unofficial relationships that may not be accounted for in the organizational chart. For example, "teachers bring their own history and values into the classroom and pass it along in the teacher's lounge, mailroom, and after-hours gathering spots" (Deal, Purinton, & Waetjen, 2009, p. 4). Often going unseen, these unofficial relationships foster the collaboration needed for organizations to innovate, adapt, and generate new knowledge (Cross, Borgatti, & Parker, 2002). SNA provides a way "to quantify and visualize the ties and overall structures of formal and informal networks" (Daly, Molenaar, Bolivar, & Burke, 2010, p.3).

SNA can also be a powerful tool to study school systems and organizational change (Daly, 2010). Fleming and Juda (2004) found that key leaders can function as gatekeepers and manage networks by connecting smaller groups together to make larger networks. In schools, principals can serve as these gatekeepers by having the ability to make and facilitate

connections between groups and manage access to expertise (Anderson, Leithwood, and Strauss, 2010). While formal leadership can have a positive impact on school systems, it is also important to examine less formal connections as well. For example, Mullen and Kochan (2000) found that cross-school teacher networks can play instrumental roles in bolstering shared leadership, supporting positive organizational change, and strengthening teacher efficacy. Furthermore, studying networks in schools can assist in transforming the generally isolated nature of teaching in classrooms into better connected information sharing communities (Edge & Myopoulos, 2008).

Because recent changes in education policy require all content teachers to teach ELs in integrated settings, studying how schools organize around teaching ELs through a social network perspective is useful for this dissertation. These policies need to move from legislative bodies and research institutions through school districts and into the classrooms. In order to do this effectively, educators must work together to share knowledge and resources to adequately support ELs. However, the extent to which this type of information and resource sharing in the EL educational community is occurring has yet to be examined. Thus, it is important to explore the development of social capital in these settings through investigating the social networks that attend to educating ELs.

Research Questions

Guided by these ideas, the purpose of this study is: (1) to examine English learner-related communication and information networks among teachers, administrators, and instructional aides within schools, and (2) to identify the factors that facilitate communication about EL instruction among teachers, administrators, and instructional aides. Given this purpose, this study will focus on the following two research questions:

1. Who do educators turn to for advice and information regarding the education of English learners?
2. What factors facilitate communication about EL instruction among educators?

Conclusion

The preceding literature review outlined several themes that set the stage for the proposed study. The first theme outlined the advantages and disadvantages of academic tracking. In general, tracking appears to benefit high achieving students more than those needing additional scholastic support. One group that has been substantially impacted by tracking is the EL population. In addition to tracked academic programming, ELs have suffered from marginalization in schools and inadequate teacher training, factors that all contribute to low levels of academic success and limited access to postsecondary education.

These outcomes give rise to issues regarding social justice and equity, especially when it comes to how support is provided. Though the *Castañeda* standard defines the guidelines for acceptable EL programming, it does not account for the legal contradiction between *Lau v. Nichols* and *Brown v. Board of Education* regarding equity and equality. As discussed in the previous chapter, the *Brown* decision concludes that separate is inherently unequal, while *Lau* upholds that ELs have the right to access supplemental language education. Fitting into the rulings of both decisions, the state of California has implemented a two-way approach it calls designated and integrated ELD. This change in education policy allows for students to receive ELD support in general education classes, integrated ELD, as well as in classes specifically designed to provide additional language support, designated ELD. A key shift included in the policy is the idea that all teachers of ELs are expected to teach both language and content simultaneously across all academic departments, a step forward from previous policies that

expected students to learn language first before learning content. This shift may make it difficult for teachers who are not accustomed to explicitly teaching language alongside academic content. Still, to bolster this work, California has also created new ELD standards that dovetail with the CCSS to assist students in moving towards both language and content goals as well as their teachers in supporting them through the learning process. Restructuring ELD programming in this way widens the opportunity for increased academic success and postsecondary access for ELs.

However, such initiatives must move from legislative bodies and research institutions to school district offices, and from school district offices to the individual classrooms at each school site. Once these initiatives reach the school sites, steps need to be taken to ensure the effective transition from policy to practice. After being informed of these new policies and the practices that result from their implementation, site level educators will need to develop an inquiry and reflection process for the maintenance and progress of high quality EL support. A possible component of a school's inquiry and reflection process may be the act of seeking advice or information regarding the teaching of ELs. Advice and information seeking interactions allow teachers to build and share social capital, which should result in greater levels of student support, and thus greater levels of student achievement. In addition to gaining a better understanding for how schools build and share social capital, studying and analyzing social networks around advice and information seeking may yield important information regarding how well initiatives move from the academy to the school site. The following methodology chapter will provide a detailed explanation of how the proposed study will examine these social interactions through an explanatory sequential mixed methods approach.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Overview

The chapter begins with an explanation of the research design that will outline and provide a rationale for the use of explanatory sequential mixed methods. The process for site and participant selection will come next, followed by a summary of the procedures. The chapter will then proceed with providing detailed explanations for the two phases of data collection and analysis. The chapter will close with a discussion of the limitations of the study.

Research Design

To answer the research questions, this study used a mixed methods research design (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). A mixed methods approach collects quantitative and qualitative data, analyzes both sets of data, and integrates the results in order to respond to research questions or hypotheses within a single study (Creswell, 2014). While some research studies can use either purely quantitative or purely qualitative methods to accurately answer research questions, other studies require a blended approach (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007). The rationale for using mixed methods in this study is that examining school ELD networks using solely quantitative or solely qualitative methods cannot provide an accurate picture of how ELD networks can support EL instruction. Quantitative data was used to map school staff networks and to identify who is sought out for EL-related advice and information. However, this data is limited in providing the reasons for why people go to the people they do for advice and information as well as in gathering the details of what is discussed in those communication episodes. To fill this gap, qualitative data was collected and analyzed as well. Thus, this study used mixed methods to answer the research questions in the

best way possible (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989; Johnson and Turner, 2003; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998).

The particular mixed methods approach this study used was the explanatory sequential mixed methods design (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). First, quantitative data was collected and analyzed. This was followed by qualitative data collection and analysis to assist in the explanation of the initial quantitative results. For this study, the initial quantitative phase outlined advice and information seeking networks regarding the education of ELs. Once the networks were mapped and analyzed, the subsequent qualitative phase interviewed key actors to help explain why the network connections appear the way they do. Through this research design, the quantitative results provided statistical data that were analyzed and used to create visualizations of social networks. Subsequently, these statistics and visualizations informed qualitative data collection and analysis in a way that built on the quantitative results by including detailed participant perspectives that helped to explain the outcomes from the quantitative phase.

Mixed methods designs may have a quantitative emphasis, qualitative emphasis, or equal emphasis between quantitative and qualitative approaches (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007). This study placed equal emphasis between the initial quantitative phase and the subsequent qualitative phase since the understanding of data in the first phase would have been incomplete without the second phase and vice versa. The phases were connected after the quantitative data was analyzed as these results were used to select participants and create the interview protocol for the second phase. Data from both phases were integrated and analyzed together in the discussion section of this study.

Participant and Site Selection

The study was conducted in a large, suburban school district situated in the southwestern United States. Since EL reclassification is most vital in the middle grades, the research site was chosen from the district's middle schools (Hopkins, Thompson, Linquanti, Hakuta, & August, 2013; Thompson, 2015). After using the state department of education's database to glean EL demographic data, I created a table to compare the total number of ELs, reclassification rate, and total number of LTELs from each school. From this table, I chose to examine Oak Heights (pseudonym), the middle school with the highest EL and LTEL enrollments (See Table 1). Table 2 shows a breakdown of the EL population by grade level. A diverse population of all staff connected in any way to EL instruction were included as participants in the research study. This included site administration as well as certificated teachers and classified instructional aides.

Table 1
English Learner Totals and Reclassification Rates

School	Total ELs	Total LTELs	Reclassification Rate
Oak Heights	**164**	**85**	**14.90%**
Valley Verde	116	65	22%
Mountain View	108	47	15.40%
Village Glen	71	17	26%
Walnut Creek	68	33	18.30%

Table 2
English Learner Totals by Grade Level

Research Site	Grade	Total Students	Total ELs	Percent of Population
Oak Heights	6	455	69	15.1%
	7	460	60	13%
	8	442	35	7.9%

Procedures

I scheduled a meeting with the principal of Oak Heights in order to discuss the reasons their site was chosen for this study and to discuss the possibility for research on their campus. Once the principal agreed to have their staff members participate in the study, I asked them to sign a letter of support for the research to be conducted at their school. After the letter of support was signed, I worked with the principal to schedule an opportunity for data collection. The principal at Oak Heights allowed me to begin data collection eight weeks prior to the end of the school year.

Data collection included two phases, an initial quantitative phase followed by a subsequent qualitative phase. Phase one addressed the first research question and phase two addressed all research questions. The first phase collected responses via an online survey. Prior to data collection, participants had an opportunity to ask me any questions about the study. Those who volunteered to be a part of the study digitally signed a consent form. Consenting participants were then given time during a morning staff meeting to fill out a 20-minute, online survey either at school during the meeting time or a time and place convenient for them. Specific details about the survey are provided in the section below titled *Phase One*.

The second phase of data collection depended on the survey results from the first phase. Quantitative data from phase one provided demographic information about respondents as well as information regarding who they go to for advice or information regarding the education of ELs. Mapping the social network and identifying the roles and responsibilities of the actors only revealed a portion of the story of how educators shared information about EL education. In order to gain a better understanding for why these connections occur and what types of information and advice were shared between actors, phase two collected qualitative

data through a semi-structured interview protocol based on significant findings from phase one. Specific details about the interview process are provided in the section titled *Phase Two*. Data from both phases have been combined and interpreted together in the results section of the dissertation.

Phase One

Instrumentation. The quantitative phase of the study employed a version of the School Staff Social Network Questionnaire, an instrument originally designed to study school leadership practices, modified for use with ELD programming (Pitts & Spillane, 2009). The survey has been validated (Pitts & Spillane, 2009) and utilized as a trusted instrument for mapping advice and information networks in school settings (e.g. Frank et al., 2011; Hopkins, Lowenhaupt, & Sweet, 2015; Spillane, Kim, & Frank, 2012; Spillane & Kim, 2012; Spillane and Hopkins, 2013). The survey for this project included a single socio-metric question that asked respondents about their educational advice and information seeking behavior regarding ELs. Specifically, the question asked, "During this school year, to which of the following people have you turned for advice about curriculum, teaching, or student learning specifically related to English learners?" The roster method was used because this study only focused on the ELD networks within the research site. This method, where respondents choose names from a list, lessened response burden and allowed respondents to quickly find and select names (Butts, 2008). To capture as accurate of a network as possible, an open-ended box was also made available for respondents to add names that may have been missing from the list. In addition to collecting personal and professional demographic data Similar to Spillane, Kim, and Frank (2012), this study's survey also collected information regarding leadership roles,

and opportunities educators had for professional development with respect to teaching ELs in addition to personal and professional demographic data (See Appendix).

Data collection. This study used Qualtrics software due to its ability to accurately obtain data needed to analyze social networks. It was also chosen for its ease of use for both researcher and research participant. I introduced the study by meeting with department level leaders along with school administration during a leadership meeting prior to delivering the survey. After our meeting, department leaders notified their content area teams about the study and the survey that would be sent to all staff members. I sent the online survey to the entire staff the same morning set aside for their department level meetings. Those who chose to participate completed the survey during this time or during a time and place convenient for them within a one-week window. The recruitment message made it clear to staff that the results would be confidential and would not be used in any evaluations. It was also made clear that the university and I own the data, not the school or district. Furthermore, I communicated that only de-identified data would be shared with the district and school.

Study sample. An invitation to complete the online survey was sent to 63 staff members including teachers, administrators, and instructional aides at Oak Heights Middle School. Thirty staff members (47.6%) responded to the online survey. Participants included twenty (66.6%) females and eight (26.6%) males. Two participants declined to state their gender. The majority of participants were over the age of forty-four as shown in the following distribution: 25-34 years old (13.3%), 35-44 years old (20%), 45-54 years old (40%), and 55-64 years old (26.6%). The largest ethnic demographic reported was white (66.6%) followed by Hispanic (10%), Asian (10%), Middle Eastern (3%), and Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (3%). There were no American Indian or Alaska Native nor were there Black or

African American participants. Two (6%) participants declined to state their ethnicity. With respect to educational attainment, two (6.6%) reported earning a bachelor's degree, twenty-six (86.6%) earned a master's degree, one (3%) earned a professional degree and one (3%) earned a doctoral degree. Respondents held a variety of teaching positions. There were nineteen general education teachers, four special education teachers, five elective teachers, and two administrators. The respondents had averages of 18.06 years of teaching experience, 11.3 years of experience working at the school site, 9.7 years of experience in their current role, and 16.5 years teaching English learners.

Table 3
Participant Demographics

Demographic Variable		*N*	*Entire Sample*	*Interview Sample*	
Gender					
	Male	8	26.66	2	20
	Female	20	66.66	7	70
	Decline to State	2	6.6	1	10
	Total	30	100	10	100
Age					
	25-34 years old	4	13.3	3	30
	35-44 years old	6	20	3	30
	45-54 years old	12	40	3	30
	55-64 years old	8	26.6	1	10
	Total	30	100		
Ethnicity					
	American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0	0	
	Black or African American	0	0	0	
	Asian	3	10	3	30
	Hispanic or Latino/a	3	10	0	
	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	1	3.3	0	
	White or European-American	20	66.6	5	50
	Other: Middle Eastern	1	3.3	1	10
	Decline to State	2	6.6	1	10
	Total	30	100		
Level of Education					
	Bachelor's degree	2	6.6	1	10
	Master's degree	26	86.6	9	90
	Professional degree	1	3.3		
	Doctorate degree	1	3.3		
	Total	30	100		

Table 4
Years of Teacher Experience

	Entire Sample		*Interview Sample*	
Demographic Variable	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Total Years of Teaching Experience	18.06	9.3	13.7	10.34
Total Years at school site	11.3	8.8	6.3	7.73
Total Years in current position	9.7	8.08	6	7.8
Total Years working with English learners	16.5	9.3	11.6	10.9

Data Analysis. Network data gleaned from the survey was mapped onto a sociogram using ORA software to show relational connections between actors, making salient who goes to whom for advice and information regarding EL education. Initially, the research design sought to gather data that aligned with a sociometric approach to analyzing the EL network at the research site. The sociometric measures *in-degree centrality*, the total number of people the staff reached out to for advice or information, *out-degree centrality*, the total number of people individual staff members reached out to for advice or information, and *betweeness centrality*, a measure that accounts for the ability for individual actors to link others together regarding advice or information were initially slated for use (Freeman, 1979). However, due to a low response rate (47%), I was not able to analyze betweeness and focused the analysis on in-degree and out-degree centrality. Through examining in-degree ties, I was able to identify salient leaders that provided advice or information regarding EL education within the organization. Due to the likelihood of influence in triadic interactions, key advice givers were identified as individuals who were sought after for advice or information by two or more others (Krackhardt, 1998; Krackhardt, 1999). Using professional demographic data from the survey, I identified formal and informal leaders as key advice givers (Spillane, Healey, & Kim, 2010). Formal key advice givers were those that held formal leadership positions (i.e. school administrators, counselors, teacher consultants, coordinators, or teachers on special assignment) and provided advice or information to at least two others. Those with teaching responsibilities in addition to their leadership role were considered part-time formal leaders. Informal key advice givers were those who held no such formal leadership appointment, but were sought after for advice or information by two or more individuals (Spillane, Healey, & Kim, 2010). In addition to in-degree and out-degree centrality, I also analyzed tie frequency,

or how often respondents reached out for advice or information regarding ELs. Analyzing data in this way provided valuable insights into how school leadership at Oak Heights organizes around EL instruction.

Phase Two

Participants. After demographic data was collected and the social networks from the research site were mapped and analyzed, the results from phase one were used to select salient participants from the entire research population to be interviewed in phase two. First, a list of participants willing to be interviewed was generated. From this list, I selected participants based on several factors generated from phase one. These factors included in-degree, out-degree, leadership position, and teaching assignment. Ten participants responded to requests for an interview.

Instrumentation. A semi-structured interview format was used for this study. I created an interview protocol that consisted of a set of open-ended questions prior to conducting the interviews. While the semi-structured interview protocol contained questions that all interviewees were asked to respond to, it also gave me the freedom to probe and ask follow-up questions depending on interviewee responses to gain deeper insight when necessary (Edwards & Holland, 2013). Interviewing in this manner provided me with greater authority than an unstructured interview, where questions are not formulated prior to the interview, and allowed for more flexibility than a structured interview, where questions lead to closed rather than open-ended responses (Ayres, 2008). Though I had some authority in the direction of the interview, the power dynamic was about equal between interviewer and interviewee given that interviewees were free to provide their perspectives and stories in any way they chose (Mason, 2002).

Because this study followed an explanatory sequential design, the semi-structured interview format was well suited to provide qualitative data that followed and was directed by the initial quantitative phase. The primary function of this interview protocol was to investigate what happened, how it happened, and why it happened (Kvale, 2007). Given the results from phase one, I created an interview protocol that included questions that allowed respondents to elaborate on their advice and information seeking behavior regarding EL education. Sprandley (2016) suggests the use of *grand tour* questions, general questions that elicit detailed descriptions of a cultural landscape, as well as *mini tour* questions, follow up questions that highlight particularly interesting aspects of a cultural landscape. Phase two of this study utilized both.

Data Collection. After interview participants were identified, I contacted them via email in order to schedule interviews for a time and place of their choice. Prior to each interview, each participant was asked to sign an informed consent form. I also explained that at any point, the participant could stop the interview for a break or discontinue the interview completely. After consent was provided, I commenced the interview process by asking the questions outlined on the semi-structured interview protocol. The interviews were recorded in order to capture verbatim responses from each participant. To ensure the capture of clear and accurate responses, I used a digital recorder with microphones for both myself and the interviewee. Each participant took approximately 30 minutes to complete all interview questions. At the conclusion of each interview, I thanked each participant for their time and provided contact information in case a participant wishes to withdraw or inquire about the study at a later time.

Participants. According to explanatory sequential mixed methods design, participants for the qualitative phase are selected based on salient features identified in the quantitative phase. However, this selection process is contingent on the number of participants that indicate a willingness to be interviewed. The survey responses showed that less than half of the respondents, thirteen out of thirty, indicated a willingness to provide follow up interviews. An email was sent to all thirteen potential interviewees. Ten out of the thirteen were able to schedule interviews. Though the interview participants were not selected explicitly based on salient characteristics gleaned from the quantitative phase, they still represent a diverse sample of the entire population of participants. All names have been changed to preserve the anonymity of the respondents.

Table 5
Profile of Participants

Pseudonym	Teaching Role	Leadership Title	Grades Taught	Subjects Taught	Language in Addition to English
Mrs. Kavari	General Education	None	7,8	Science	English & Farsi
Mrs. Pucci	General Education & English Language Development	English Language Development Coordinator	6,7,8	English, History, & English Language Development	None
Mr. Smith	General Education	Teaching Consultant & Department Chair	6,7,8	Video Technology	None
Mrs. Hansen	General Education	Grade Level Chair & Response to Intervention Teacher on Special Assignment	6,7	English	None
Mrs. Griffin	Special Education	None	6,7,8	English & History	None
Mrs. Suarez	Elective	None	7,8	Spanish	English & Spanish
Mr. Quezon	Vice Principal	Administration	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	None
Mrs. Matanghari	Librarian	Teacher Consultant	6,7,8	All	None
Ms. Richardson	General Education	None	6	Math	None
Mrs. Williams	Special Education	None	6,7,8	Math & Science	None

Data analysis. Interviews were individually scheduled with each respondent and occurred at a time and place that was convenient for the interviewee. Eight interviews were held at the research site, one was held at a middle school near Oak Heights, and one was held at a coffee shop. Interview duration averaged 28 minutes in length with the shortest interview lasting 16 minutes and the longest lasting 38 minutes. Each interview was recorded on using the Samsung Voice Recorder app and sent to Rev.com for transcription. Transcripts were then uploaded to Dedoose.com for coding and reviewed a minimum of three times. Initial review sought to identify salient concepts and phenomena through open coding by characterizing responses by attaching these ideas to short descriptors or codes. Subsequent reviews added and refined codes until reaching a point where patterns began to emerge within the codes

(Glaser, 1965). Through focused coding, the most recurrent and pertinent codes were categorized into broader themes. Connecting back to the research questions, the themes that emerged include insights about how the organization of the EL program, EL-related advice and information ties, and opportunities available for staff to collaborate around EL instruction. These categories were then stitched together producing the following narrative of how ELD programming at Oak Heights during the time of this study.

After all interview data was collected, each audio recording was transcribed using Rev.com transcription services. Analysis of the interviews began with open coding to identify salient bits of information as they arose in each transcript (Benaquisto, 2008). I then sorted and organized the codes into thematic categories that are pertinent to the aims of this study (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Once the categories were created, focused coding took place where I reviewed each transcript once again to find additional bits of information that related and added depth to the thematic categories (Creswell, 2013). This type of analysis yielded fruitful narratives that sought to explain the phenomena outlined in the advice and information seeking networks from phase one (Kvale, 2007). Comparisons between the first and second phases generated possible explanations for why certain individuals were more or less likely to connect with others as well as how network interactions may have affected the network as a whole.

Limitations

This study included several limitations that are mainly organized around threats to internal and external validity. Internal validity is the degree to which the study can point to causal relationships between variables, and external validity is the degree to which the study can be generalizable to larger populations (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). With respect to

internal validity, though the survey can help map social networks, network connections may also be influenced by other factors that are unobservable using the instruments utilized by this project (Spillane, Kim, & Frank, 2012). Additionally, I could guarantee that respondents provided honest answers on the survey or during the interviews. Regarding external validity, this study only examined the advice and information seeking networks at one research site with a relatively low response rate of 47%. While studying such a small population does not provide an adequate platform for making generalizations about advice and information seeking networks regarding teaching ELs, the knowledge gained from the project may help identify novel ways to optimize social interactions within schools to improve the educational opportunities of ELs.

Conclusion

This chapter was dedicated to explaining the research methods that were employed to address the research questions for the dissertation study. Data for this study was collected from Oak Heights, a middle school in a large school district in the southwestern United States. The research site was specifically chosen because it was the school with the highest EL enrollment in the district. Teachers, administrators, and other staff that are involved in educating ELs from the school had the opportunity to participate in this study.

The study focused on how ELD networks can support EL instruction. The research design followed an explanatory sequential mixed methods model in order to best capture the experiences of participants as they related to ELD networks. This approach occurred in two phases, an initial quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase. The first phase used an online survey to retrieve demographic data and ask participants about who they turned to for advice and information regarding EL instruction. This data was used to construct a social

network map that provided a visualization of the ELD network at the site. Initially, I wanted to analyze the data by looking at three centrality measures: *in degree*, *out degree*, and *betweeness*. However, due to a low response rate, I needed to change the analysis to only examine in-degree, out-degree, and frequency measures. Analyzing quantitative data in this way allowed me to identify formal and informal leaders that provided advice and information regarding EL education at Oak Heights.

After the data from phase one was analyzed, it was used to assist in the selection of participants for the second phase. Phase two of the study consisted of conducting semi-structured interviews with salient participants from the first phase. The purpose of this phase was to give added shape to the quantitative data from phase one and hopefully reveal thick descriptions of ELD network interactions. The data from phase two was analyzed through open and focused coding. Themes that assisted in explaining the phenomena outlined in phase one emerged and will be discussed in the next chapter.

In addition to the study's methodology, this chapter also provided its potential limitations. These limitations are mainly concerned with internal and external validity. Regarding internal validity, the study may be limited in its ability to point to accurate causal relationships between variables due to not being able to control participant honesty and the influence of outside factors that may be immeasurable through the methods chosen for this project. Regarding external validity, the study will take place at one research site with a low response rate. Having such a small sample size may affect the generalizability of the results across larger populations. Still, it is important to examine the study's research questions in order to make positive steps towards improving education for all students. The chapters that follow will outline the findings of the study and provide a conclusion that discusses the

relevance of the results for EL education in its current state as well as possible avenues for future research.

Chapter Four: Results

Overview

As outlined in chapter one, the aim of this project was: (1) to examine English learner-related communication and information networks among teachers, administrators, and instructional aides within schools, and (2) to identify the factors that facilitate communication about EL instruction among teachers, administrators, and instructional aides. Preceding chapters have explained the significance of the study, provided a review of the pertinent literature, and laid out the methods for addressing the research questions:

1. Who do educators turn to for advice and information regarding the education of English learners?
2. What factors facilitate communication about EL instruction among educators?

The results of the study were analyzed in two steps. The quantitative data was analyzed first utilizing descriptive statistics as well as social network analysis measures. Results from the quantitative analysis assisted in the selection of the participants for the qualitative component of the study. Qualitative data was subsequently analyzed through coding interview transcripts, identifying themes, and deriving meaning from those themes. This chapter presents the findings through assertions that address the research questions. The chapter will conclude with a summary of key findings that blends both the quantitative and qualitative data.

Research Question 1: Who do educators turn to for advice and information regarding the education of English learners?

There was substantial variation in participants' EL-related advice seeking and providing. Overall, 26.6% of survey respondents indicated that they did not seek out EL-related instructional advice from anyone at their school, while 73.3% of respondents indicated

reaching out to at least one other for advice and information regarding ELs. Whereas half of these respondents indicated reaching out to two or fewer individuals, half indicated reaching out to three or more individuals, and as many as 12 others. The top five information seekers included two math teachers, an elective teacher, a science teacher and the vice principal. Overall, the average outdegree for all participants was 2.96 with a standard deviation of 3.10 and range of 0 to 12. With respect to advice providing, the average indegree for the sample was 2.25 with a standard deviation of 1.57 and a range of 0 to 6, meaning that staff members at this school were sought out by an average of two others for EL-related advice. 56.6% of respondents reached out to members of their own departments and 50% of respondents went to individuals within their own grade level teams. Below, I describe the characteristics of prominent advice seekers and providers in the network.

Basic education teachers, the ELD coordinator, counselors, and administrators were key advice and information providers in the EL network. At the department level, the basic education department provided the most EL-related advice, with 53.3% of incoming ties (i.e, advice or information requests). Basic education department members include teachers that teach English, social studies, or both. Following basic education, the math department provided advice to 30% of the population. The ELD, administration, and counseling departments each provided 26.6% of the population with advice.

I also examined the formal and informal leadership designation of advice and information providers. At the individual level, the two most sought-after individuals were the principal and a math teacher who was also the AVID coordinator, who each had an indegree of six. Then, the ELD coordinator, a counselor, and a basic ed teacher each had an indegree of five. Survey respondents indicated reaching out to a total of twelve formal leaders for advice

and information regarding EL education out of the 40 total staff members that were listed as advice givers. In-degree ties for all formal leaders ranged from one to six ties. Out of the twelve formal leaders, ten were identified as key advice givers. Four out of the twelve were considered full time formal leaders and included the principal, the vice principal responsible for EL programming, and a counselor. Six of the twelve were considered part-time formal leaders due to having teaching responsibilities in addition to their leadership roles. Part-time leaders included the ELD coordinator, the former ELD coordinator, the AVID coordinator, a teacher consultant, the Response to Intervention Teacher on Special Assignment (RTI TOSA), and the ASB advisor.

The number of in-degree ties varied between formal key advice givers. The teacher consultant and ASB advisor had two in-degree ties. One counselor had three in-degree ties. The previous ELD coordinator, RTI TOSA, and assistant principal responsible for EL programming each had four in-degree ties. The ELD coordinator and another counselor had five in-degree ties. The principal and AVID coordinator had the highest in-degree ties with each receiving six connections.

Out of the forty total staff members that were listed as advice givers, survey respondents indicated reaching out to a total of ten informal leaders for advice and information regarding EL education. The ten informal leaders included four math teachers, four basic education teachers, one special education teacher, and one EL aide. Of the four math teachers, one was responsible for teaching an ELD cluster. Of the four basic education teachers, one taught a dual language social studies class.

The number of in-degree ties also varied between informal leaders. The special education teacher, two math teachers, and a basic education teacher received two in-degree

ties. The EL aide, math teacher who taught an EL cluster, and dual language social studies teacher all received three in-degree ties. Two basic education teachers topped the list of informal key advice givers with one receiving four in-degree ties and the other receiving five in-degree ties. Because the data indicates that there was an equal number of formal and informal key advice givers, looking at formal leadership designation alone may not be a clear identifier for prominence in the EL network.

Overall, these findings revealed that formal position played a role in EL-related instructional advice providing at Oak Heights, where school administrators, counselors, and EL-specific staff tended to be sought out most often. The qualitative findings lend support to and expand upon this assertion, particularly related to the role that counselors, administrators, and the ELD coordinator played in the network. Further, they reveal the importance of EL aides and the bilingual parent liaison in facilitating EL-related interactions among staff.

Counselors and administrators brokered EL-related interactions. Analysis of qualitative data revealed that counselors and administrators often played brokering roles in the EL network, connecting staff members who would otherwise be disconnected. Mr. Smith, a video technology teacher and the elective department chair, described how the counseling department linked him to appropriate EL resources and personnel:

> I feel like I can find them and get the support that I need just based on using an email system or even calling the counselor sometimes. If I'm not even sure I can just call the counselor and say "Hey Ms. Manchester [a counselor] who should I contact about this?" And she's very good about tracking other people down, other resources.

Similarly, interviewees described how administrators helped to connect staff members around EL issues. As an example, Mr. Quezon needed assistance with supporting a student whose mother had been deported. Once he exhausted all the resources he could find at the school

site, the principal, Martin Vazquez, suggested that he reach to district level administration for additional perspectives on how to support the student and her family as he described:

> I turned to them because we were out of ideas on how to support this student. We tried everything that we could think of. We brought it up in our leadership meeting. Martin told me to talk to Xochitl (director of learning support services) and Jasmine (executive director of learning support services). I reached out to them. Explained to them the student's situation. What we were struggling with. They wanted to meet with me and the other administrator at another school who was facing a similar situation.

The district level administrators then pointed him towards an outside social work program and they were able to provide support for the trauma experienced by the student and her family.

In addition to brokering between individuals, administrators seemed to play a key role with respect to resource acquisition and event planning. When Mrs. Pucci, the EL coordinator and SEI teacher, needed a new set of books for ELs, she first reached out to the vice principal:

> I first went to Yalitza because she's our vice principal who heads EL, so she tends to be one of the first people I talked to. Then she reached out to the librarian. I talked to the library also, and they were awesome about figuring out a solution to that because they knew that there was ... We had books, but it's also good to get books with the increased interest so it's middle school topics, not elementary school topics. They found a place. So I talked to my admin, Yalitza, and I also talked to Mrs. Matanghari, our librarian.

Because administrators control budget allocation, Yalitza was an important person for Mrs. Pucci to collaborate with along with Mrs. Matanghari who assisted in ordering the books once the budget was approved.

Collaboration with administrators was also an essential component when it came to planning events. When it came to creating inclusive campus experiences, Mrs. Matanghari went to administration and EL leadership:

> I think that would have to be a collective effort. We've talked about it at our campus. The admin and the EL person has, especially in today's social climate, creating an atmosphere of acceptance and maybe students that are not feeling

> very comfortable with immigration issues or whatever. We've talked about doing some kind of festival or just like a multicultural day or something like that, but it takes a lot of people to buy in and today, teachers are so overworked and spread so thin, that doing one more activity ... I don't know. It's just hard to pull it off. Then you have to get the parents to want to do it too and they may not be comfortable.

Though it seemed that these particular events did not materialize after the planning stages, administration and EL leadership seemed to be the gatekeepers for scheduling events at the school site.

The EL coordinator was a key provider of EL-related information. Several respondents referenced whole staff meetings as the main forum for which EL-related information was disseminated. At these meetings, Mrs. Pucci, the EL coordinator, would provide the staff with statistics concerning EL demographics at the school site as well as brief the staff on EL performance on standardized tests. She was regarded as somewhat of an expert on site when it came to EL education as Mr. Quezon described in reference to working with Mrs. Pucci on student class placement, "A lot of the EL referrals come from our EL coordinator. She knows the most." Mrs. Suarez also indicated that Mrs. Pucci would be someone she turned to if she needed information for a specific EL student or for assistance with instructional strategies:

> Well, I would go to the EL coordinator, if I had a particular question. And how would I use it? I mean I would think that if it wasn't asking about a particular about a particular student, it would really be about how to implement a particular strategy. One thing that I'm always working on in my class is writing. So, okay. What are some good strategies for increasing, not only sentence structure but the formatting of conveying ideas either in paragraph or three-paragraph essay or whatnot. So I would envision, I would want their information and then I would just try to implement it in my class.

Still, though many respondents referenced Mrs. Pucci's EL presentations and instructional expertise in their accounts, most responses only referenced hypothetical scenarios in which

they would reach out to the EL coordinator. One reason for this may be due to the location of the EL coordinators classroom as Mrs. Hansen explained:

> The EL teacher is kind of farther away on campus. I usually go to the people that are closest to me, like in my ... We're grouped by grade level, so sixth grade is mostly in this building. Seventh grade is in the building next to us. Then, eighth grade is farther, you know, down on campus. We're all kind of situated together so that we can go to each other. We're close by.

In her account, Mrs. Hansen explained that communication with the EL teacher was hindered by the distant location of their classroom. Instead, she would go to people that were closer to her, which also happened to be those that shared the same grade level as she cited that the buildings were organized in a way that grouped teachers by grade level.

EL aides provided information about students and their family backgrounds. Some interviewees described reaching out to EL aides for advice. Mrs. Hansen, an English teacher and response to intervention teacher on special assignment, felt that her level of teaching experience was beyond the limit necessary for reaching out for advice on instructional strategies and described going to EL aides about information regarding ELs academic performance and home life:

> You know, it's mostly people resources for me, you know? I'm not asking like, "What do you do?" or this ... Because I feel like I've been teaching for a long time. I feel like I have that knowledge within me, like how I can help move the kids forward. But mostly it's people resources, like especially if I need to know maybe family background, like what do you know about the family, you know? The kind of personal kind of thing. That's what I tend to seek more assistance with. Like I said, I go ask the instructional, the aides that are helping those students because they kind of have built a strong bond and connection. They know the kids from a personal standpoint, and that's kind of where I'm looking to find that information more than what strategies do I use in the classroom.

EL aides were described as working closely with ELs on both individual or small group levels. Such a close proximity allowed aides to gain deeper knowledge of individual student

proficiency levels and progress in both academic language and content. While EL aides seemed to be a valuable resource to teachers, not all EL aides were described as having the same level of commitment to collaboration as others as Mrs. Richardson, a math teacher, described:

> Yesenia Chaidez [an EL aide] works with me pretty often. Maybe like three times a week. And we passed in the hallway around the break room. So we collaborate often about students and their needs. Or kind of just how well we think they're doing. That's small collaboration. The two EL aides I mentioned earlier, one for period one and one for period two, they don't really seem interested in collaborating. I've tried to give them a lot of independence and choice. But I think they're still feeling fresh and new. Or they don't want to presume that they can make decisions in my class, which I would totally welcome. One helper I worked with last year, her name was Christina ... I forget her last name. But she was just amazing. She always took initiative with the kids, or she asked me for various resources that she thought would help bring the kids to success. She made suggestions. So that's what I think I would appreciate more from collaboration. But my two ... the two girls I have now are kind of just ... they show up and they kind of putter around the room.

In her experience, Mrs. Richardson saw working with EL aides as a meaningful relationship for which to share responsibility in teaching ELs. She described instances where knowledge was shared in a reciprocal fashion, where teacher and aide co-created a learning environment for student success. However, this was not always the case. Mrs. Richardson contrasted previous successful collaborative experiences with those that were more superficial in nature.

Several respondents also indicated the need for translation as a point of interaction with EL aides. Teachers indicated that curriculum translations as well as translations for communication with student families during special education meetings and parent conferences were a critical area of support when it came to EL education as Oak Heights.

The bilingual parent liaison was a link between families and staff. In addition to EL aides, another person that staff would turn to for information about students' families was the

bilingual parent liaison, Ximena Marquez. Mr. Quezon described Ximena Marquez as an important link between the school and the Spanish-speaking parent community:

> For our EL populations, a lot of the families work with our bilingual assistance staff member, Ximena Marquez. She really works and talks and communicates a lot with them. One of the things that she mentioned ... It was for our fifth grade parent night back in March. She does the presentation. For most of our incoming fifth grade families, we do a English presentation in the gym. Ximena does the Spanish version. She was talking about how she thought it would be better if at least an admin popped in to meet the families. We hadn't done that before. None of our admin had done it before. I brought it up in our leadership team. Martin, in the middle of our English presentation, he actually left the English presentation and spent the rest of the time in the Spanish presentation so that those families could see our admin presence as well. Martin is unique in that he can speak Spanish as a principal.

Delivering information herself during parent meetings, Ximena also worked with site leadership to improve the connection with the parent community as exemplified by her advocacy for equal administrative presence in both English and Spanish-speaking informational sessions. Her work with parents also seemed to give Ximena valuable insight into factors that affect student performance beyond the school site. These insights made her a key source for student background information as Mrs. Richardson described:

> I think when I noticed a student isn't doing their work I try to find out their background story. And that's where I turn to Ximena. And she'll ... like this one student during parent conference week just trying to get ahold of them and she kind of gave me more on that student's back story. So that always kind of helps to understand. Maybe like empathize a little bit more why that student's not doing their work. This year I've chosen to professionally learn or develop myself by learning how trauma affects students. So I think that's been really interesting, too. Just learning how some of my EL students have experienced significant trauma at home or in the past and how ... or just to allow that to help influence my perspective on them. I still hold them to high standards, but I wouldn't nag them or shame them ... hopefully I wouldn't nag or shame any of my students. But it would give me a better understanding of, "Well, of course they're not doing their work because they've got bigger problems than turning in a math piece of homework. They've got bigger problems than knowing how to multiply." When your basic needs aren't met, school can be a safe place to be at. But achieving or doing your homework is secondary to

> many other things. Ximena would be someone I would go to a lot for those kinds of questions.

Seeking information independently was prevalent. Besides reaching out to other people, several respondents also reported doing research on their own. Mrs. Pucci cited the need for turning to digital resources because of a lack of district support when she transitioned into her position as the EL coordinator: "This year, it was kind of a lot of going online and finding information and talking to my aids who did have training. Because of my weird circumstances with coming into this position late in the year, I didn't get the training from the DL. There's a lot of online resources for this." On the other hand, Mrs. Matanghari found that digital platforms sought her out based on her online research activity as she explained, "Facebook data mines me and they find what I like and then they send me more stuff." She further elaborated on being a part of several educational groups that allowed for digital collaboration through sharing pedagogical strategies and resources online.

Research Question 2: What factors facilitate communication about EL instruction among educators?

The following section describes three major themes that emerged relating to circumstances that impacted interactions associated to EL instruction. These themes are: program structure, teacher beliefs, and opportunities for learning and collaboration. Each theme is outlined in a subsection that explains the nuances and intricacies of how each concept either hindered or contributed to the facilitation of communication related to EL instruction.

Program Structure

Different aspects of how the ELD program was structured at Oak Heights either promoted or hindered EL-related interactions between staff members. First, I describe two student placement categories within the ELD program: Structured English Immersion (SEI) and mainstreaming. The way that students are placed may have had an impact on interactions between staff members. Mrs. Pucci's roles as both the EL coordinator and the SEI teacher may have influenced others to seek her out as an ELD expert. Additionally, EL interactions between grade levels and content areas may have been influenced by mainstreaming as this practice placed EL students in general education classes across all disciplines. Mainstreaming also allowed for instructional aides to be placed in various general education settings, which also had an impact on the EL network. Second, I describe how uncertainty around the ELD program and its personnel may have had a negative effect on EL-related interactions. Recent changes in ELD leadership at Oak Heights may have contributed to uncertainty about the program and who to go to for advice and information, thus causing lower rates of EL-related interactions. The following section outlines the different ways that the ELD program structure affected the advice and information networks at Oak Heights.

Program structure influenced EL interactions. The ELD program at Oak Heights as described by interviewees was consistent with the structured English immersion model (SEI). In the SEI model, EL students are taught in classes separate from their peers that are classified as fluent in English (Freeman & Freeman, 1988). At Oak Heights, students at the early stages of developing English fluency are grouped together in separate English and social studies classes specifically designed for students with the "highest needs of English language direct support" (Mr. Quezon). This direct support came in the form of assessment-based

interventions. Mrs. Pucci, the ELD coordinator and SEI teacher, described the SEI class in this way, "Our ELD ... If you're talking about the sheltered ELD class, I'm the only one who does it, so I kind of plan it for my students using assessment data and interventions as necessary." Because of this, Mrs. Pucci may have been seen as an expert in ELD by her colleagues and contributed to her high indegree.

The program at Oak Heights also incorporated ESL mainstreaming. ESL mainstreaming includes ELs at a range of proficiency levels that are placed in general education classrooms. ELs in mainstreamed classes may be currently receiving instruction in SEI classes for part of the school day, students that formerly received SEI instruction, or ELs that receive all instruction through general education classrooms (Carrasquillo & Rodriguez, 2002). According to Mr. Quezon:

> Students can be mainstreamed and pushed into general education classes, we call them EL clusters. We group them into gen ed classes, but they're clustered so that there's an EL aide. We have several EL aides that can follow them and support them as they're pushed into general education classes.

ELs that are placed in general education classes are grouped into "clusters" and receive language support through the assistance of EL aides that "follow" students throughout the school day. Mrs. Richardson, a general education math teacher, described the process for student classification and the way students and EL aides are distributed:

> In general, I think the students take a test. You either classify or reclassify or you don't. That influences what classes they're in. If they're really, really low. Most of them are mainstreamed. I think the students who are not so low that they need to be in a smaller classroom, but low enough that they'll need extra support, those teachers tend to get a EL aide in the room. I have one of those in my first period class. She comes and she works with the EL learners in my room. I have that for my period two class as well. I don't think there's enough resources where every teacher gets to have an EL aide who would like one. Even students who aren't reclassified as proficient. I'm pretty sure all of them

> could really use the assistance of an EL aide in the room. Especially when it comes to math in our new curriculum that has so much reading involved.

Which classes receive the support of EL aides depended on the proficiency levels of students clustered in each class. Though Mrs. Richardson enjoyed the benefits of EL aide support in two periods, she also acknowledged that Oak Heights did not have enough resources to support every student or teacher that might want or need this type of support.

The organization of the ELD program at Oak Heights may have shaped EL related interactions in several ways. The first factor is EL placement. Teachers with EL clusters in mainstream classes may be more inclined to reach out to others with respect to EL instruction or support. Secondly, the allocation of EL aides may be a direct influence on interactions between aides and teachers. Another factor that may have influenced interactions is whether or not students share the same teachers between content areas. For example, a math teacher might be more likely to reach out to a grade level peer that teaches social studies or English if that colleague shared the same student. Finally, teachers might have been more inclined to see and reach out to Mrs. Pucci as an expert because she held both the EL coordinator position and taught the sheltered English class. These factors may have contributed to Mrs. Pucci's rank as the second most sought after individual in the EL network.

Uncertainty around program structure may have hindered EL-related interactions. Uncertainty may have been a contributing factor to the network finding that 26.6% of respondents did not turn to anyone to discuss EL related issues. Though the majority of respondents were able to articulate specific aspects of the ELD program at Oak Heights, there were several instances in which program descriptions were accompanied with statements of uncertainty. These statements were evident in responses from both administrators and

teachers. Uncertainty around the structural elements of the program may have been attributed to fluctuations in EL personnel that were specific to this particular time period at Oak Heights. When asked about who was responsible for EL instruction Mrs. Suarez, a Spanish elective teacher, explained:

> Couldn't give you a name right now. I'm embarrassed to say right. I know we did have a teacher who was the lead for the English department but she's left mid-year so I don't know if someone has officially come in and taken over her place. I feel like we're in transition especially this year, by staffing on the EL program.

EL program leadership was in flux during the academic year the interviews took place. Not only did the EL coordinator position change in the middle of the year, the vice principal that oversaw the EL program was on maternity leave. Mrs. Pucci, the EL coordinator, explained some challenges with the respect to the unique transitional situation that she experienced:

> This year's been kind of interesting because she's on maternity leave, and she has been since I first took over. So she went on maternity leave, and then I took over. We talked before, but we're still kind of trying to figure that out as we go. We have Jane as our stand-in for maternity leave, and she's amazing. She has lots of experience as a principal, and she's been at Oak Heights before, but we kind of figure things out as they come up. Coming in only having done this for two months is kind of hard to answer because I haven't been there since the beginning of the year when those big questions come up that you have to answer with testing and so forth.

This account suggests that Mrs. Pucci had minimal preparation for the ELD coordinator position prior to her placement. Furthermore, her experience implies that her site-level direction is coming from a substitute administrator. However, staff knowledge about EL leadership was left uncertain. After explaining the previous EL coordinator's early exit, Mrs. Richardson continued, "Right now Mrs. Pucci and then Yalitza Sanburg is the AP that I think would oversee her, but she's on maternity leave right now, so I think I guess it falls under Mr. Quezon. Until she comes back." Though the circumstances surrounding the organizational

leadership of the EL program during this particular year seemed to impact staff understandings of how the program was structured, Mrs. Matanghari pointed out that it was an ongoing issue:

> Well to be honest, I feel like this program has kind of been shuffled around a lot. It's usually fallen on a new teacher or somebody that may not have been able to fill a whole full-time position. The CELDT coordinator or what used to be the CELDT coordinator was not an ELD instructor or collaborative teacher. So I feel like that part of it was really disjointed. The last two years we have a teacher that has been consistent in trying to build that program up with those students and providing them support. So I'm hoping that the program is kind of starting to build up to be stronger than it has been.

She described norms around placing new faculty or faculty with part-time placements in the EL coordinator position. Further, she noted that the EL coordinator at Oak Heights has not always been the same person that teaches the sheltered ELD class. Having fluctuations in EL leadership and a history of disconnections between leadership and instructional roles with respect to ELD might have impacted staff knowledge about EL program structure and leadership at Oak Heights. Lacking knowledge of programming and personnel may have negatively affected EL-related interactions between staff at Oak Heights.

Teacher Beliefs

Teacher beliefs played a role in affecting EL interactions both within the school and between the school and the community. Teachers generally believed that communication between the home and the school was an important element for student support. Interview responses indicated that teachers and EL aides communicated with families regarding students' experiences outside the classroom and how those experiences impacted the students' experiences at school. Many teachers also believed in supporting ELs by using strategies that generally supported all students, a belief that may have had a negative impact on EL-related

interactions. The following section outlines how teacher beliefs impacted the advice and information networks at Oak Heights.

Teachers believed that communication between a student's home and the school was an important aspect of the advice and information network. While the survey from phase one of the study failed to capture network interactions between school personnel and members of students' families, interview data suggested that these interactions influenced educational outcomes of ELs as well as the attitudes of the educators that worked with them. Mrs. Pucci described how a student's previous educational experience from the country they immigrated from as well as the level of value placed on education by their family could impact their success in the classroom:

> I've got students who came from Venezuela, and they've had a private education, and education is highly valued. They have siblings who are currently in college or have graduated college. I've got other people whose parents I've met, and both of the parents are college educated.

In her experience, Mrs. Pucci drew a correlation between parent involvement and how well a student could draft essays with the level of education of an ELs parents and siblings. Though Mrs. Pucci outlined positive experiences with cultural and familial interactions, other teachers cited challenges. In Mrs. Hansen's account, she stated that it was difficult to communicate with parents:

> You know what is a challenge? Is the communication, like the home-school communication. Sometimes it's hard, because especially we have a high Spanish-speaking population, and so it's hard to contact a parent when you need to speak to them about their child and the child's progress, and so you either ... They don't always return your phone calls, or they don't always ... You know, if you sent home a note or something that needs to be signed, they're not always responding back to. I feel that's a challenge is making sure they receive the information. Sometimes there's, if you do a lot of communication through the computer, or the website, your classroom website, and they don't have access to the computer, then they don't have access to

> what's happening in the classroom. I find that to be a challenge, that home-school communication piece, trying to connect with parents. Sometimes I feel that they see us ... It's hard for them to communicate back with the teacher, even if they have concerns, yeah. That's the thing that I find is challenging.

The difficulties Mrs. Hansen described seemed to revolve around digital literacy and access to technology as well as translation related issues which resulted in a communication breakdown between the school and the home.

Other challenges teachers cited had to do with EL homelife and time dedicated to supporting EL education. Mrs. Griffin felt that ELs did not have enough exposure to linguistic instruction, especially if they were not speaking in English outside of the classroom:

> Mine right now is, my uncertainties, that not making a difference with them, which is hard. There's some students I don't see a lot of improvement with and they continue to go back to the same thing. I realize this is it, this one hour, it's not even a full hour. It's 50 some minutes with me. Is the only time they have any exposure to this. Some of them, I even see them with their friends, or they only hang out with their cousins ... I'm thinking of something specifically, and they only speak Spanish at lunch. So they're only speaking Spanish outside of the classroom and even then, I know it's broken Spanish because I can understand Spanish. So they aren't getting the exposure to language or hearing a lot of it, except just here at school.

When it came to academic success for ELs, Mrs. Griffin cited use of their primary language with friends and family members outside of the classroom as a factor that hindered an ELs ability to gain proficiency in English. Mrs. Giffin also highlighted low levels of primary language proficiency as an additional obstacle to EL education. In her response, she expressed feelings of ineffectiveness as a teacher, which may have contributed to her negative perspective towards the primary language use of her students outside of the classroom.

To close the gap between ELs and their English-proficient peers, Mrs. Richardson suggested that before and after school tutoring needed to be provided. However, she believed

that even if these supports were available, it would still be a challenge for ELs because of additional family responsibilities they might have as she explained:

> I think I'm uncertain that I meet their needs. I think there's a lot of doubt, too, whether I can really affect change for them. I think I feel limited in the fact that I don't know a second language. I think I'm also tempted to delegate it to someone else to say like, "Okay, that's not my job. It's someone else's job." Or, "I'm unable to meet that need so who can I give that to because I've already got so many other things to do." I think there's also that element of time. I haven't learned how to master small groups in a large ... in my teaching. Which means tutoring after school, tutoring before school. And besides the fact that that probably doesn't meet a lot of my EL needs, because they have to go straight home, they've got ... after school hours, who knows what it is as far as them taking care of household chores or watching younger siblings. So besides the fact that that probably doesn't meet their needs, as a professional it's really hard to commit all those extra hours without being compensated for them, too. Because now that I've been building a family I've been spending less time after school just because you have more than just teaching in your life. You have a family and you've got your own kids to help with homework and a home to manage.

Adding to the challenge of providing a support that some ELs may not be able to utilize because of family responsibilities, Mrs. Richardson also includes personal factors like not being paid for extra hours of work and using time that she would otherwise use for responsibilities she has with her own family as barriers for providing additional EL support. Like Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Richardson also expressed feelings of low efficacy. In her response, she honestly described wanting to pass off the responsibility to teach ELs to someone else. This was not necessarily because she did not want to help ELs, rather the feelings seemed to stem from being overwhelmed with responsibilities in addition to not feeling effective as a teacher.

Most educators believed in supporting ELs through using strategies that benefited all students. Oak Heights was in the process of establishing a site-wide initiative for using common academic strategies and language in every classroom to support all students through

implementing AVID WICOR strategies that focused on developing student writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading. This concept was promoted by site administration as Mr. Quezon stated, “We've incorporated a lot of the AVID Instructional Strategies. Good instructional strategies help all populations, including EL. That's one of the new things we did. We incorporated that to all of our staff.” Yet instead of focusing on how WICOR strategies could explicitly support ELs, incorporating these methods seemed to compete with EL-specific strategies that were presented by the EL coordinator as Mrs. Suarez stated:

> Sometimes the EL coordinator might give us strategy but it's more, I feel, rather than that strategies really work through like when we talked about WICOR as a staff when we're trying to reach all students. More so than, "Hey. This is great for your EL students, use it with them." We're more of the mindset here that, every student could benefit from every strategy. So let's just not categorize them to one particular segment of student population.

Mrs. Richardson critiqued the practice of overgeneralizing when it came to supporting ELs with strategies that benefit all learners. She felt that teaching in this way did not address the nuanced cultural and learning needs of EL learners as she stated:

> But if I were really ... I feel what I would need to see in order to have professional development specifically to meet the needs of EL learners would be to have this dedicated time where that is their focus. I want to know culturally how do they perceive education. I want to know what supports they're getting at home, or lack of supports they're getting at home. How I can meet their needs in a way that I'm not meeting them. What are their students’ needs? I'm all down for strategies that give you more bang for your buck. But then I think it's too easy to over-generalize and say, "Oh, yeah, I help EL learners because I help all my students." But I don't want to oversimplify the matter like that. So quality EL instruction, or quality professional development for how I could meet the needs of EL learners I wouldn't say I've received much.

Furthermore, the belief that teaching to all students may have decreased the perceived need to collaborate around EL instruction as Mrs. Williams stated, “I really haven't used any support because we give them support so much anyway that I feel that we're supporting everybody

where they need to be supported. So I really haven't gone to anybody for EL support. So I don't know if I can answer that for you."

Along with AVID strategies, Tuesday professional time provided department and grade level teams with an opportunity to organize and collaborate around the Common Core (CCSS) and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Though these standards work in conjunction with the ELD standards to build both academic content and language proficiency for ELs, several respondents shared little to no knowledge of the ELD standards. This was despite that fact that the EL coordinator spent time specifically dedicated to educating the staff on the ELD standards during Tuesday professional time. When asked about her collaboration experience around standards, Mrs. Williams shared:

> We just discuss how difficult it is for all our students because of all the language and the math. I also did a collaboration with gen ed science teachers about the Next Generation Science Standards. We didn't really discuss EL a whole lot, if at all really. We just talked about how to teach these new standards to our students. EL didn't really come up in that.

In her experience, Mrs. Williams' collaboration across departments did not include organizing around ELD standards or instruction. Mrs. Richardson also shared similar sentiments:

> I can't say that I know the EL standards. I remember learning about them during one Tuesday professional development. And realizing how incredibly rigorous they are. They seem very hard to achieve. It almost just makes it harder for kids to reclassify. But I'm not, no judgment, I'm not professional in that manner. The new Common Core state standards for math definitely have increased the amount of collaboration we have with each other just to ... how we can have good strategies or using our data to say whether what we're doing is working. I don't know that it's changed much just besides the frequency of collaboration.

Mrs. Richardson's account shows how the CCSS can impact the amount of time educators spend on collaborating and focusing on content instruction and data analysis. While she acknowledged that professional development around the ELD standards was delivered during

Tuesday professional time, incorporating the ELD standards alongside of the content standards was again left out of the discussion. The belief that strategies that help all students also help EL students may have hindered interactions specific to EL needs. While it may true that strategies that help all students also help ELs in some aspects, there are distinct supports that ELs require to build the academic language necessary to experience success in the classroom. Taking focus away from specialized practices that explicitly focus on EL needs as part of a teaching philosophy that is centered on helping ELs through using strategies that help all students may not be an adequate method for maximizing opportunities that aid ELs in realizing their full academic potential.

Opportunities for Learning and Collaboration

The staff at Oak Heights had several opportunities for EL-related learning and collaboration. These opportunities can be categorized as formal or informal depending on the nature of their organization. Each opportunity influenced EL-related interactions in different ways. The following section describes these opportunities and how they impacted EL-related advice and information networks at Oak Heights.

Educators had several opportunities to build social capital around teaching ELs. These opportunities can be categorized as either formal or informal in nature. Formal opportunities are opportunities that are organized by leadership at the site or district. On the other hand, informal opportunities are any interactions that occur outside of formally structured collaboration times. Formal opportunities can further be classified into two categories: voluntary and mandatory. Some formal opportunities are mandatory as part of an educator's professional role. Yet other formal opportunities, while organized by the site or

district, are optional. Because informal interactions were dependent on personal choice to reach out to others, all informal are considered voluntary.

As the EL coordinator, Mrs. Pucci was a prominent advice provider with 16.6% of respondents reaching out to her for EL-related issues. This finding may have been influenced by her responsibilities as the EL coordinator as well as additional opportunities to collaborate with coordinators from other school sites at district level meetings. Mrs. Pucci described many responsibilities that came along with her leadership position as EL coordinator. Along with teaching the sheltered ELD English and social studies classes, she also felt responsible for "transmitting information" and providing staff with up-to-date, EL-related information and instructional techniques. Much of the information that she passed on to the staff en masse was received from mandated meetings at the district office. Mrs. Pucci described her experience of going to the district office for training:

> At the meeting, we get to talk with other EL coordinators and get new information as it comes up so that we can introduce it to the EL community at the site you work at…Caroline Carmichael, the head person, who kind of leads everything. Then all the other EL coordinators are a wealth of information, obviously.

The training at the district office provided Mrs. Pucci with a space to seek advice and information from Caroline Carmichael, the district level ELD coordinator, and other ELD coordinators from secondary level schools from around the district who she described as providing "a wealth of information" and went into further detail about the interactions at the district office:

> At the meeting, we had brief discussions about how you can pass on information about the different ELD techniques to your site to then have that be spread. I don't have as much of an opportunity because when you're at your school, you kind of stay there, but at the meetings you get to say hi and talk then. I've only been to one.

She provides a contrast between communicating with other coordinators at the district office meetings and the networking limitations while at the school site. Mrs. Pucci also highlights that the "ELD techniques" and "new information that comes up" at the district office meetings are to be passed on to staff at the site level.

The main forum for disseminating EL-related information at Oak Heights was what respondents called "Tuesday professional time". These meetings were planned by site administrators and occurred on late-start days every Tuesday morning. The meetings were not optional and it was the expectation that all staff members attend. Staff grouping as well as meeting agenda topics would rotate. Depending on the day, educators would meet in either department teams, grade level teams, or as a whole staff. Releasing EL-related information would most often occur when the staff met as a whole. Mr. Smith described EL-related meetings in this way:

> Pretty much every year we have a few hours dedicated a few times during the year usually at the beginning and then somewhere towards the middle we have the professional growth days and we'll have the EL teachers present and they'll usually present strategies that will help any language learner in your class. They've done different things where they actually provide us with documents to read or booklets to read, articles to read. And then they've also walked us through a lesson, a sample lesson, using EL strategies. Using scaffolding or different graphic organizers and things that kids can access with language challenges.

Few job-embedded opportunities to learn about EL-related issues and strategies. In addition to asking participants about who they went to for advice and information, I also asked how often they went to the people they listed in order to get a better sense of the frequency of interactions related to EL education. Participants could choose from four options: a few times per year, once or twice per month, once or twice per week, and daily or

almost daily. While 10.1% of interactions occurred once or twice per week and 17.9% of interactions occurred once or twice per month, 64.8% of EL-related communication only occurred a few times per year. None of the participants sought information or advice about EL instruction daily or almost daily. 62.5% of interactions that occurred one or twice per month occurred between individuals within the same department and 68.7% occurred within the same grade level. Formal leaders reported communicating most frequently regarding EL education. Of the four individuals that reported reaching out to others one or twice per week, three held formal leadership positions. All of the interactions that occurred once or twice per week were between members of the same department.

Interview results also supported the low frequency of EL-related interactions found in the survey data. When asked about EL-related collaboration opportunities, Mrs. Griffin shared, "Definitely not enough, but we do have a training every once in a while. Or the EL coordinators will do something in a training, maybe like once a year." Other respondents also felt that "a few hours dedicated a few times a year" was not enough, such as when Mrs. Matanghari expressed:

> Well, sometimes we have like a weekly rotation of either staff development or breakouts or whatever, and in the past the EL coordinator has maybe given us some instructional tools or methods to use with those students. It's probably not frequent enough, you know. Or it's something that maybe gets pushed by the wayside, because differentiating is hard in a class of 35 kids.

In her description, Mrs. Matanghari added the idea that even though strategies are shared, they may not be used because of the difficulty associated with differentiating for large class sizes. Mrs. Richardson also shared this feeling:

> We have Tuesday professional developments, and they give us good strategies. But then it's kind of just to each their own. If you want to use it, you want to use it. And I enjoy that freedom, but at the same time I'm the type of person

> that needs accountability because there's just so much to do when it comes to teaching. There's so much to think about. And it's natural for your mind to get divided. So unless you're held accountable, you might not be focusing on something that is honestly something good to focus on. Because there's just too many good things to focus on when it comes to teaching.

Mrs. Richardson suggests that despite EL-related information being passed on to staff during the Tuesday meetings, it was still a personal choice for teachers to implement the strategies. The norm of preserving teacher autonomy is evident in her response and is met with missing accountability, a component she felt would better ensure that the EL population was more adequately supported. For Mrs. Richardson, it was difficult to focus on EL-related issues in the midst of the multi-dimensional responsibility of teaching math to a diverse population of students.

For Mr. Smith, some strategies felt like a burden if they did not have a direct application to the specific students he had in his class. However, seeing ELs as real people beyond the EL designation assisted him with being open to learning and implementing new approaches as he described:

> We have those inservices and things like that. Like any inservice, there's some that you go to and you find that "Oh wow this is great. I have to do this in my class tomorrow," and then there's other ones that it just seems like one extra thing that you have to try to do that's not really gonna have a big impact. Throughout the year doing those inservices it's always nice to hear that. I think one of the real valuable things too is to realize that this is a kid, it's not just a label EL, it's an actual kid that you have to try to help. I think having that kid's face in your mind when you're in one of these inservices and you're thinking "How can I help Salvador tomorrow in class? Is this gonna help him?" I think that is one of the things that makes it more motivating if you're trying to listen and learn at an inservice. Try to apply it to "How is this gonna help a kid?" Try to get an actual child in your mind while you're trying to learn. It helps.

Though some respondents described formal opportunities to learn about EL education, none participated in additional professional development. Other formal opportunities to organize around ELs were Teaching and Learning Cooperatives (TLCs) and Distributive Leadership. According to Mrs. Kavari, TLCs are "additional professional growth classes" that teachers can take to increase their knowledge base. Mr. Smith also referenced TLCs:

> And then of course there's always, you can sign up for different things if you'd like. We have these things called TLC's. What is it called? Teacher learning co-operative I think it's called, stands for. Anyway, if you sign up for TLC's, there's a couple different ones that have to do with teaching English language learners. That would be something you do on your own time, extra hours. If you document enough TLC points you get a little raise from [the district]. Its like any professional growth activity, it's encouraged that way. It could be learning about computers, it could be learning about a certain author, curriculum-based instruction. All different things like that.

As per the district website, the TLC program is a voluntary program that "promotes high quality professional learning in support of District goals, focuses on enhancing student learning, and compensates teachers for their commitment to continuous improvement with a 3% salary increase for 3 years after 40 points are achieved". TLC classes are organized by classroom teachers across the district and are made available district-wide.

Respondents also described the distributive leadership program as an opportunity to collaborate around teaching ELs. Mrs. Hansen shared that "It's called distributive leadership, but it's teachers are able to collaborate on something that they're passionate about that they want to learn about, so we have structure time for us to meet in those groups." Through distributive leadership, staff are provided with professional time to study a subject in small groups and share their learning with the whole staff at the end of the year. Mrs. Suarez described the program in this way:

> As a staff we can decide on distributive leadership groups where the staff decides if they want to work on one particular project throughout the year and there's always an ELL project. So for those teachers who want to dive more into it, they can be a part of that distributive leadership and they might have one on one with students or they might look at strategies or read books and then come back and debrief them. So you could be in distributive leadership in AVID or ELL or there's many different ones. But that would be open to the staff to participate in it. I personally haven't participated in that but it's available to the staff.

Even though several respondents described TLCs and distributive leadership as opportunities to learn and collaborate with others around EL education that were available to the entire staff, none took part in either opportunity.

Informal opportunities to learn about EL education occurred both during and outside of school hours. Respondents provided multiple accounts of informal collaboration interactions that occurred outside of formally structured opportunities. Some interactions took place during the school day prep periods as Mr. Smith described:

> Other than those Tuesday mornings there's emailing each other. Common prep time sometimes. That's one thing that we have to organize ourselves. If I know a kid needs help I'll reach out to the EL teacher that they have and say "Hey I have this student in my class. He needs help in this area. What do you have in place in your class?" It's just a matter of us communicating one on one.

While Mr. Smith's account illustrates electronic collaboration about specific students, Mrs. Pucci added that informal collaboration could occur during unplanned moments in passing:

> I'm sure they do randomly when you just bump into someone and start talking about a kid that you share. It's kind of nice at a middle school as opposed to an elementary school. There's four other people on campus who share your kid. So if you're thinking what are some other ways that could work with this kid ... As an elementary school teacher, you're kind of out of options because you're their teacher, but middle school you can go to their science teacher or their math teacher or their history teacher and talk about, "Well, what are you doing because I see he's doing awesome in your class?"

Informal collaboration also happened after school hours, and at times off campus as Mr. Quezon described his monthly gathering with assistant principals from other school sites, "Structured, I don't have any. Informally, I meet with ... Happy hour with middle school APs every month. We're going to talk shop. We meet once a month. I think it was the last one that we talked about our different EL programs."

Summary

The ELD program at Oak Heights followed the SEI model, which impacted EL-related interactions in several ways. Students were placed in ELD classes based on ELPAC test results. Designated ELD English and social studies classes were provided for students at the lowest levels of English proficiency while higher level ELs were mainstreamed and clustered in general education settings. Student placement in these classes may have influenced the degree to which their teachers reached out to others regarding EL instruction. Additionally, the amount of EL support (i.e. the presence of EL aides) was contingent on the proficiency level of the students assigned in each class. Having an EL aide assigned to a teacher's classroom was another factor that may have fostered connections between teachers and EL aides. Finally, teachers may have seen and reached out to the EL coordinator as an expert because she taught the sheltered English class and held the EL leadership position.

With respect to beliefs some respondents believed that educating ELs was the responsibility of all staff, others cited that it was the responsibility of the EL program and its staff. Though teachers were provided with autonomy when it came to teaching ELs and respondents described how the use of assessments and student needs affected educational practices. However, at times the norm of autonomy contradicted a school-wide initiative to use common academic language and practices. These beliefs around responsibility and

autonomy may have impacted the willingness of staff to reach out to others for support or information regarding ELs. Several challenges were also noted regarding teaching EL students. These challenges revolved around beliefs about students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds, issues with communicating with students' families, and the time it takes to provide additional support. While these challenges may have provided opportunities for staff to collaborate around EL instruction, most responses suggested that staff were overwhelmed and were struggling to find ways to address them.

The ELD program at Oak Heights was also going through several transitions in leadership at the time of the study. The vice principal responsible for the EL program was on maternity leave and the previous EL coordinator left the position mid-year. A substitute administrator and a new EL coordinator filled in these leadership positions after the school year started. Having new EL leadership may have affected the understanding of the EL program was organized as many respondents had difficulty with articulating the EL organizational structure. Furthermore, having a history of high-turnover and placing EL leadership responsibilities on new or part-time faculty may have also affected staff knowledge about EL programming at Oak Heights. Inconsistent understandings about what resources are available and how programming is organized may have shaped the way staff interacted with each other around EL education.

The ways in which the staff at Oak Heights shared advice and information varied greatly and was largely contingent on a staff member's professional role and the needs associated with that role. Some teachers sought out more experienced colleagues when asking about teaching strategies or assessments. Others turned to EL staff. While the EL coordinator was seen as an expert, respondents described the coordinator's formal presentations as a

source of information more often than reaching out to this person specifically for strategies or resources. Several respondents shared that EL aides were a key source of student information, especially regarding student performance and home life. In addition to EL aides, the bilingual parent liaison was also described as an important component of linking the parent and school communities. Respondents also went to counselors and administrators as these staff members were described as having the ability to connect others to the resources they needed to gain information, materials, or to plan events. Finally, several respondents described doing online research on their own or collaborating with online learning communities.

Opportunities to develop social capital around ELs at Oak Heights can be divided into two categories: formal and informal. Formal opportunities were organized by either district or site leadership whereas informal opportunities were EL-related interactions that happened outside of these formal structures. The EL coordinator attended district level meetings with other coordinators and district level leadership to gain knowledge about EL-related information and strategies to share with the school site.

At the school site, administrators planned "Tuesday Professional Time". Every Tuesday the staff had the opportunity to meet in department teams, grade level teams, or as a whole staff to discuss and collaborate around instruction and other school initiatives including ELD. While some time was dedicated to ELD, many respondents felt that there was not enough time dedicated to discussing EL instruction. Other formal opportunities included TLC's and distributive leadership. TLC's were teacher-led professional development courses that give teachers a small salary increase after completion. Distributive leadership was a site-based opportunity to use professional time to research education topics of shared interest in small groups. While district and site meetings professional development meetings were

mandatory, participating in TLC's and distributive leadership was optional. Although EL-related TLC's and distributive leadership opportunities were available, no respondents participated in these offerings.

Informal opportunities to collaborate occurred in between formal opportunities. Respondents described instances in which they would reach out to colleagues for EL-related advice or information during common preparatory periods or by having chats in the hallway. These interactions also occurred after school hours as well as off campus during happy hours with staff from other school sites. No matter where or when these interactions occurred, all informal interactions were voluntary.

Integrating the survey results from phase one with the qualitative data from phase two yielded several explanatory insights when it came to the EL advice and information networks at Oak Heights. Survey results indicated that respondents reached out to a variety of others when it came to EL related advice and information. This may have been due to the unique nature of each respondent's professional role and the different responsibilities and needs each position required. While survey results show that respondents sought out an equal number of formal and informal leaders, formal leaders were sought out more often than informal leaders. Interview data revealed that while informal leaders may provide advice and information regarding instructional strategies or student information, formal leaders were described serving as links between people and resources.

According to the survey 56.6% of respondents sought out members within their department and 50% of respondents sought out individuals within their grade level. This result may have been due to the planned professional development opportunities as well as the school layout of Oak Heights. Almost all respondents described participating in "Tuesday

Professional Time". These designated professional learning opportunities occurred weekly and had specific days that were dedicated to allowing staff to work in either department, grade level, or whole staff groupings that rotated weekly. Teachers may have used these opportunities to organize and collaborate around teaching ELs in these designated professional groups. Furthermore, the layout of the school may have had an impact on grade level interactions as the buildings at the school grouped staff together by grade level.

Considering out degree, 50% of participants reached out to two individuals or fewer. Furthermore, the survey revealed that most interactions (64.8%) only occurred a few times per year. These findings may have been a result of the formal and informal time allocated to EL related interactions. Many respondents felt that not enough formal collaboration time was spent on EL related issues. Additionally, while Tuesday professional time allowed time and space for EL interactions in various groupings, it was not guaranteed that this time would be used for EL related issues and may have been used on other educational matters such as AVID WICOR strategies or content standards. Respondents described WICOR as a school-wide focus that provided strategies that benefited all students, including ELs. This may be a reason that explains why the AVID coordinator was one of the highest advice providers at Oak Heights.

Chapter Five: Discussion

Introduction

The population of ELs in the United States is rapidly increasing. However, this demographic has historically been underserved in the areas of educational access and support. Recently, several legal and educational initiatives at the federal and state levels have been put in place in order to increase educational access and reduce the achievement gap between ELs and their English proficient classified peers. In order to explore the impact of these new initiatives on the EL population, this study drew on social capital and social network theory to examine how educational organizations organized in ways to build social capital around teaching ELs. Thus, the purpose of this project was: (1) to examine English learner-related communication and information networks among teachers, administrators, and instructional aides within schools, and (2) to identify the factors that facilitate communication about EL instruction among teachers, administrators, and instructional aides. Specifically, the study addressed the following research questions:

1. Who do educators turn to for advice and information regarding the education of English learners?
2. What factors facilitate communication about EL instruction among educators?

This chapter begins with a discussion of the findings from this study and how they relate to existing literature. Implications for practice and policy in educational leadership will follow. The chapter will conclude with an acknowledgement of the limitations of the study and recommendations for future research.

Summary of Findings

Overall, this study found that EL interactions varied significantly and were fairly limited. Still, several factors emerged that might have influenced EL-related advice and information ties at Oak Heights. These factors can be divided into three major categories: organization of EL instruction, teacher beliefs, and opportunities to develop EL-related social capital. The first category elaborates on how structural components of the ELD program impacted EL-related interactions. The second category sheds light on how the different EL-related collaboration and learning opportunities available for staff affected EL-related advice and information ties.

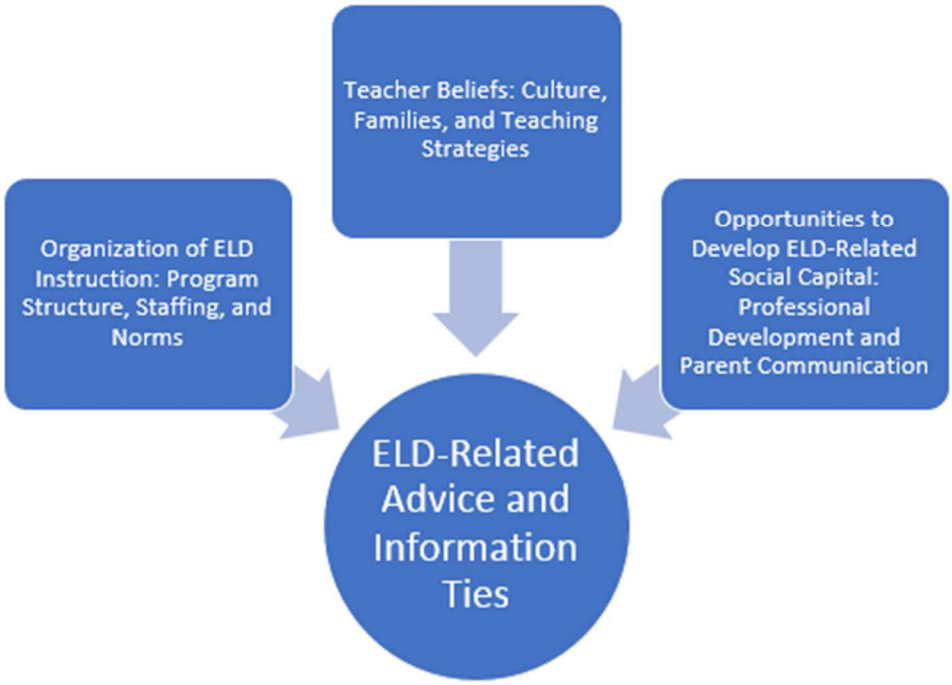

Figure 1
Factors Affecting EL Interactions

Organization of ELD Instruction

Mirroring organizations outside of educational settings, schools also use organizational charts to display formal leadership hierarchies (i.e. Los Angeles Unified School District, 2017; NYC Department of Education, 2017). Following the typical educational organizational chart, the EL leadership hierarchy at Oak Heights had teachers and instructional assistants situated below the formally designated leadership of administrators and the ELD coordinator. This structure impacted the flow of information and resources. For example before Mrs. Pucci, the ELD coordinator and sheltered English teacher, could order books for her class, she first needed the budget approval of Yalitza Sanburg, the vice principal. Once the budget was approved, Yalitza also served as a broker between Mrs. Pucci and Mrs. Matanghari, the librarian, to facilitate resource acquisition. Consistent with Fleming and Juda's (2004) conclusion that gatekeepers within an organization can serve as connectors between and within departments as well as with other organizations, Yalitza served as both a gatekeeper, controlling the flow of resources, and a catalyst for connecting the ELD program to the library.

Other formal leaders served as brokers as well. Within the organization, Mrs. Manchester, a counselor, linked Mr. Smith, an elective teacher, to EL staff when he was unsure about who to contact about EL-related issues. The principal, Martin Vazquez, also served as a connector. When Mr. Quezon, a vice principal, ran out of ideas on how to support a student whose mother was being deported, Mr. Vazquez directed him towards district level administrators. When he reached out to the district level administrators, they connected Mr. Quezon to an outside social work program where he was able to find resources to support the

student and her family. At Oak Heights, formal leaders directed individuals to resources that would be able to support EL-related needs.

Though there was a clear organizational hierarchy at Oak Heights, many respondents reported feeling unsure about describing it. It was clear however, that the ELD coordinator was a central figure in the EL network. While the ELD coordinator was characterized as a key information provider, few respondents described reaching out to her for advice and information. While some described hypothetical instances for reaching out to the EL coordinator, the majority of responses suggested that the EL coordinator usually provided information during whole-staff meetings. The information the EL coordinator would deliver came from EL coordinator meetings held at the district office. Not only did the formal role of the EL coordinator foster interactions at the site level, it also created opportunities to collaborate with other leaders from different school sites at the district level.

In addition to the EL coordinator, EL aides and the bilingual parent liaison were also important actors within EL networks. Respondents described how EL aides could be integral partners in educating ELs as some aides were able to provide valuable information about students' performance in their own classes as well as other subjects. While some respondents described EL aides as being active participants in working with teachers by providing insights into how to better support ELs, other accounts described some as aides as being more reluctant to collaborate. Linking parents and the community were also important avenues when it came to EL interactions and EL aides and the bilingual parent liaison were key actors in making these connections. Though teachers reported that it was a challenge to communicate with EL families, EL aides and the parent liaison were able to support both

teachers and families by serving as translators and intermediaries for transmitting information about school and home life between the school and families.

Teacher Beliefs

Because the ELD program at Oak Heights was structured in such a way that it included both sheltered ELD classes as well as ELD mainstreaming, the majority of teachers were involved in educating ELs. Some respondents believed that all staff were responsible for EL education while others placed responsibility on ELD staff. This finding might suggest that those that believed in shared responsibility would engage in more EL-related interactions due to having a shared purpose, similar experiences, and the common goal of moving ELs towards greater academic content and language proficiency. Those that believed that EL staff were responsible for EL instruction might engage in less or limited EL-related interactions as result of possibly feeling detached from the shared purpose, experiences, and goals of those who believed that in shared responsibility.

However, the survey data indicates that interview respondents' outdegrees varied between those with different beliefs about responsibility. For example, both Mrs. Matanghari and Mr. Quezon believed that EL responsibility was shared by all staff members, yet Mr. Quezon had six outdegree ties while Mrs. Matanghari had none. Also, while both Mrs. Kavari and Mrs. Pucci believed that EL staff was responsible for EL education, Mrs. Kavari reached out to eleven others and Mrs. Pucci reached out to five. These variations challenge the simple conclusion that beliefs around shared responsibility shape a staff members willingness to reach out to others thus making it unclear whether or not these beliefs fostered or constrained EL-related interactions.

The term “responsibility” may have also been perceived in various ways. For instance, a staff member may perceive EL responsibility as the act of teaching ELs while others may have perceived it as the responsibility for managing the ELD program. This difference may explain the variation in outdegrees between those that believed in collective responsibility and those that believed the EL staff was responsible. Rather than having an explicit connection to whether or not these beliefs impact interactions in general, results may shed light on defining formal and informal EL networks by exposing the nuanced relationships that form between individuals and how those relationships are impacted by an individual's professional role and the specific EL related needs associated with those respective positions.

Opportunities to Develop ELD Related Social Capital

Along with creating and fostering interactions between individuals and groups, formal leaders are also able to regulate access to specialized knowledge (Anderson, Leithwood, & Strauss, 2010). One way this concept was manifested at Oak Heights was “Tuesday Professional Time”. These meetings provided collaboration time that rotated between various groupings that included grade-level teams, content department teams, and whole staff. It was during these meetings that the EL coordinator was able to deliver EL-related information and resources to the whole staff. Formally designated leaders had control over creating opportunities for collaboration as well as what information was to be delivered and discussed because they were the ones responsible for planning professional development time. Due to the collaborative nature of these meetings, “Tuesday Professional Time” was a central forum to build social capital around ELs.

Other opportunities to develop professionally were available at both the site and district levels. At the site level, staff were given the option to participate in distributive

leadership groups that focused on practitioner inquiry around a subject chosen by the group. Participants would engage in learning experiences throughout the year and share their learning with the whole staff at the year's end. Though there were EL-related distributive leadership groups in the past, several respondents explained uncertainty if an EL-related group was created during the time of the study. Also, there were no respondents indicated having been part of an EL-related distributive leadership group. District-level opportunities were professional development courses that staff could take to learn about different educational subjects. These courses were called "Teacher Learning Cooperative" courses or "TLCs". Completing a TLC would allow an employee to move up a half step on the district salary schedule. As with the distributive leadership groups, while some respondents described the availability of these opportunities, none participated.

When it came to professional development opportunities, staff were exposed to both formal and informal opportunities to build social capital around ELs. Some formal opportunities were mandatory while others were voluntary. Out of the formal opportunities, mandatory meetings that were held at the school site and were planned by school leadership seemed to have the most impact on interactions regarding ELs as they assigned time and space where EL social capital could be created. However, not all formal opportunities led to EL-related collaboration. Outside of whole staff presentations provided by the EL coordinator, respondents described EL-related interactions in both grade level and content area teams as rare occurrences.

Survey results indicated that staff members reached out to an average of less than three individuals regarding EL education and that 64.8% of EL-related interactions occurred a few times per year, a finding that suggests that network interactions were few and far

between. Social capital is developed when members of a community work together and use network connections to build resources and support towards the achievement of a common goal (Bourdieu, 2011; Coleman, 1988; Lin, 2002; Putnam, 1993). When staff members are more closely connected, social capital is increased and students are more likely to experience academic success (Goddard, 2003; Monkman, Ronald, & Theramene, 2005; Putnam, 2001). Interview responses added nuance to the survey results and highlighted that though "Tuesday Professional Time" gave staff time and space to collaborate and build social capital, many participants did not feel that it was sufficient in meeting their EL-related needs. This finding may indicate low levels of EL-related social capital, which may why Oak Heights had the lowest reclassification rate (14.9%) of all middle schools in the district.

Several respondents also explained informal opportunities to collaborate. These interactions happened outside of formally planned meetings. Respondents described reaching out to others using email or phone calls, talking to each other about EL students in the hallways during breaks, or meeting with colleagues after school at happy hour to discuss EL-related issues. Informal connections served immediate needs of staff regarding ELs and built social capital by sharing insights regarding curriculum, academic performance, socioemotional aspects, and other information pertinent to supporting ELs. In the absence of interacting with others, some respondents also described doing research on their own. Some responses included descriptions of researching EL-related literature and strategies through the internet and participating in online collaborative opportunities.

One aspect that may have also impacted interactions with respect to opportunities to build EL-related social capital was whether or not such opportunities were voluntary or mandatory. For informal opportunities, all the interactions were voluntary and seemed to have

immediate impact on specific staff needs regarding ELs. Formal opportunities were either mandatory or voluntary. Though staff were required to attend formal staff meetings during "Tuesday Professional Time", most EL-related information was transmitted through whole staff presentations rather than in grade level and department teams. And though voluntary opportunities were available through distributive leadership groups and TLCs, respondents did not participate or describe any peers that participated in such programs. Thus, it seems, that the participants only collaborated around ELs when it was mandated during whole staff settings, or when they needed specific EL-related information or resources at a convenient time and space.

Additional Findings Related to the Literature

Tracking. Ability grouping can be a positive avenue for allowing teachers to provide adequate support for students in order to meet them at their specific levels of need (Collins & Gan, 2013). This notion was consistent with the SEI model provided by the ELD program at Oak Heights. Students at the lowest proficiency levels were tracked into sheltered English and social studies classes that delivered specialized instruction until students gained enough proficiency to be mainstreamed. After exiting the sheltered environment, students should be exposed to rigorous, detracked classes with high expectations that support EL success (Burris, Wiley, Welner, & Murphy, 2008). However, it was unclear if teachers were able to provide continued EL support once these students entered the mainstream population.

Marginalization. Some schools have been found to exhibit apparent marginalization of EL programs, EL students, and EL staff. For example, EL teachers may be viewed as having unequal power in the organizational hierarchy where general education teachers are provided with higher status and increased instructional authority when compared to EL

teachers (Arkoudis, 2006; Creese, 2002). At Oak Heights, the power imbalance was more latent than overt. Many respondents viewed the EL coordinator as an expert, a person that was responsible for delivering pertinent EL related information to the staff and someone they would go to for advice and information regarding ELs. The EL coordinator was also a general education teacher in addition to teaching the sheltered class. Having these responsibilities complicated the dynamic between the coordinator and the rest of the staff because she was neither completely a part of the EL staff nor the general education staff. Thus, she was not able to be completely marginalized in a direct sense.

The marginalization, however, may have manifested itself in the way the staff viewed EL instruction and implementing EL strategies. ELs are better supported when EL and general education teachers collaborate (Bahamonde & Friend, 1999; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010; McClure & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2010). Such collaborative interactions work out best when they are bolstered by site administration and when teachers are ready and have positive feelings towards collaboration (Bell & Baecher, 2012). But when the administration provided time where the staff could come together to collaborate around EL instruction, the time was rarely used to build social capital around ELs. This was not necessarily because the staff did not want students to succeed, rather it may have been a matter of teacher capacity (Oakes, 1987).

Teachers of ELs. ELs need instruction and support from teachers that have been prepared to work with diverse EL populations in a way that develops both linguistic and cultural pluralism (Rios & van Olphen, 2011). Teachers need to foster educational environments that challenge perspectives that view ELs from a deficit lens and build spaces that bridge the gap between dominant and minority cultures (Carrasquillo and Rodríguez,

2002). Though every teacher in California is required to hold a English Learner Authorization or Crosscultural, Language, and Academic Development (CLAD) Certificate, few respondents described including culturally relevant pedagogy within their instructional practices that went beyond Specifically Designed Academic Instruction Delivered in English (SDAIE) strategies or the desire for more cultural events at the school.

Though teachers at Oak Heights were certified to teach ELs and received ongoing professional development regarding EL education, many still struggled to implement EL-specific instruction. Respondents described the difficulty to differentiate given the large class sizes at Oak Heights, not having enough time to provide the additional supports, and difficulty communicating with parents as challenges to meeting the needs of ELs. Instead of differentiating to meet the needs of students at a more individual level, teachers turned to strategies that were "good for all students". While these strategies did not necessarily meet all the academic, linguistic, and cultural needs of struggling students, it seemed as if they gave teachers peace of mind that they were at least doing something with the capacity and resources that were available to them.

Standards. Recent changes in education policy have paved the way for teachers to share responsibility when it comes to teaching ELs academic language. The English Language Development (ELD) standards were designed to be used in conjunction with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the Next Generation Science Standards in a way that allows teachers to teach both academic language and content at the same time. Even though these policies provide the space for increased collaboration around integrating academic language and content for ELs, this study found that this collaboration, and the subsequent integration of standards, did not readily occur.

Responses varied when it came to how well the ELD standards were understood. Some respondents were aware of the standards while others were not. No responses indicated a deep knowledge of the standards and the ways in which they were connected to the CCSS or NGSS. While some respondents shared specific EL-related instructional strategies, no responses described how ELD standards were targeted in the classroom. This was also true for the EL coordinator, the vice principal, and other participants with formal leadership designations. It was clear that site leadership provided time where it was possible for staff to collaborate around ELs in groups that varied between whole staff, content teams, and grade-level teams. And though some responses indicated that some staff were able to ask each other about how specific EL students were performing in other class and strategies other teachers used to teach ELs, no responses outlined staff working together to integrate language and content. Standards may still have a positive influence on collaboration. For the science department, the NGSS brought the team closer together as they regularly used Tuesday professional time to collaborate and create aligned lessons. Some members of the department even chose to collaborate on their own time by taking a TLC that focused on the NGSS over the summer. Still, though some staff at Oak Heights acknowledge the existence of the ELD standards, findings suggest that their integration into the interdisciplinary curriculum has not yet been fully realized.

Implications

Implications for Policy. Policy makers have moved in the right direction by creating a set of standards that align with each other in ways that support the development of both academic language and content in ELs. However, it seems as if the content standards take precedence over the ELD standards in both delivery and design. While the ELD standards

mention areas where they align to the content standards, the content standards do not. Just because the content and ELD standards have the ability to align did not necessarily mean that they did in practice. Because the content standards and the ELD standards are separate, it is still up to teachers to make the necessary connections and deliver the standards in a way that supports both content and language. In the future, policy makers can eliminate the extra step of leaving it to teachers to connect the standards on their own by embedding the ELD standards within the content standards. At minimum, future iterations of the content standards should include mention of the areas where they align with ELD standards.

In addition to embedding ELD standards within the content standards, policy makers should also highlight opportunities educators can take to include culturally relevant approaches within their curricula. While there should not be a prescribed set of cultural checkpoints that blindly stereotype students' diverse identities and backgrounds, the standards should include expectations for educators to connect academic activities to the unique experiences of all their students, not just those that represent the majority population. Policy makers can look to the Social Justice Standards and the "Framework for Anti-Bias Education" as an example for culture and identity can be included in the classroom in meaningful ways ("Teaching Tolerance", 2019). Because language and culture are deeply intertwined (Brown, 1994; Swiderski, 1993), combining academic content, ELD, and social justice standards would work towards respecting the individuality of all students and fostering understandings of and connections between the diverse cultures students bring with them to the classroom rather than separating students into categories that may lead to marginalization and inadequate support.

Implications for Leadership. The site leadership at Oak Heights did well to provide regular time and space for staff to collaborate. However, this collaboration time was rarely used by staff to interact around building social capital around ELs. This may have been because the expectations for collaboration around ELs were not made clear, or because there were no expectations for staff to collaborate around ELs. The site leadership may have also believed that such expectations were implied. Site leadership should take an active role in not only planning and providing collaboration time, but also in clearly communicating the expectations for how collaboration time is spent, especially when it comes to matters regarding ELs.

Furthermore, site leadership should also take into account teacher capacity when implementing new initiatives. Several respondents described being overwhelmed when it came to differentiating for ELs. Since differentiating for students is a foundational practice in meeting the needs of all students including ELs, leadership should factor collaboration time for differentiation and any obstacles to differentiation should be minimized. This is especially true for principals and district leadership. These leaders need to ensure that the fundamental needs of all learners are being addressed before any new initiatives are brought to the staff. Leadership should not hesitate to decrease supplementary programming when the basic needs of students are not being met.

Educational leaders should also take a closer look at how social networks, and the capital that can be built within them, impacts ELs. Like environmental ecosystems, the health of educational organizations can be linked to the density of the social interactions that occur between actors (Hargreaves & Fink; 2003). And when networks are fragmented, academic programs and the students they serve may not reach their full potential. Fragmentation can

also impact the health of the organization as a whole and jeopardizes equitable education for all students. At the site level, leaders should focus on increasing EL network ties and strength in order to increase equity in student outcomes. Leaders should also create district-level initiatives that link schools together to share social capital. And on a wider scale, leaders that have the ability to affect legislation at the national level should view network analysis as part of school effectiveness policy nationwide.

Additionally, while there are policies in place that require teachers to undergo specialized training in working with ELs (Education Commission, 2014; Meskill, 2015), there needs to be a stronger and more consistent link to how EL-specific preparation in teacher education programs and professional development opportunities are applied in the classroom. What happens far too often is that instead of the practices espoused in these trainings being effectively applied in the classroom, attendance or completion of the training becomes merely checking a mandatory box required by the state, district, or school site. Moving into the future, rather than just hoping that practitioners and administrators are employ effective EL pedagogy, evidence should be required to show which practices are used and how effective they are in supporting EL growth.

Implications for Teachers. This study found that teachers were provided with several opportunities to learn and collaborate around EL instruction. However, teachers shared particular challenges that inhibited their ability to take advantage of these opportunities and provide the type of support they felt ELs needed. With respect to formal opportunities, teachers felt that there was not enough time spent on EL professional development. In addition to this, some respondents also felt that they did not have the capacity to provide quality EL support due to lack of support, difficulties with differentiation, and balancing

home and work life. When these issues arise, teachers should work towards advocating for more time when needed and communicating capacity issues. Increased communication may result in helping site leaders better allocate time and resources towards EL support.

Implications for Parents and Families. Interview responses show that interactions between the school and EL families, though challenging at times, were part of the advice and information network that connected students' school and home lives. Some connections allowed teachers to leverage a family's previous experiences with schooling in the United States while others gave schools important information regarding trauma and immigration issues. Bilingual aides and the parent liaison played a key role in serving as links between the school and the EL community. Given these resources, parents and families should continue to communicate through these staff members as the information passed through them has the potential to support both student success in the classroom as well as family-related affairs. School leaders need to identify challenges in educating ELs and provide adequate solutions. Information from these conversations could help school leaders shape interventions and assistance opportunities that are more closely tailored to the needs of ELs and their families. Working together with families in this way can make educational institutions centers for building communities.

Limitations

This study examined EL advice and information networks and the experiences of staff as related to EL education at a large middle school. Findings from this study can help academic institutions take a closer look at how educators and school leaders organize to build social capital around ELs. However, as with any research study, this study also includes several limitations that may impact both internal and external validity.

Internal validity is the extent to which the study is able to show cause and effect relationships between variables (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Though this study was able to map connections between actors through using an online survey, the instruments used in the study may not have been able to capture all factors that may have impacted the reasons behind actors' behaviors (Spillane, Kim, & Frank, 2012). It was also not guaranteed that participants provided honest responses on both the survey and during the interviews.

External validity is the extent to which the study can be generalized on a wider scale (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). This study only examined advice and information networks at one research site. In addition to this, there was a low response rate to the survey. Both of these factors negatively affected the generalizability of the findings. Still, the results led to implications that may optimize social interactions within schools to improve the educational opportunities of ELs and their families.

Areas for Future Research

The current study focused on exploring the terrain of what EL networks might look like and how social capital might be created and shared through those networks. However, while the findings offered several insights into the factors that shaped EL-related social networks and social capital, it is clear that further investigation is needed on social networks in schools and how they impact EL education.

With respect to research methods, future projects can utilize predictive analyses measures to quantitatively investigate which identifiers make individuals key advice givers in EL networks. These studies can draw on not only this dissertation, but also the work of Spillane, Kim, and Frank (2012) as well as Hopkins, Lowenhaupt, and Sweet (2015). Both studies used the p2 model to work towards identifying salient characteristics that are

associated with advice and information tie formation. Future studies should also seek to attain greater external validity by including more research sites and participants. Results from future studies using these techniques might help organizations identify and leverage key advice givers as well as strategically plan better opportunities to build EL-related social capital.

Future studies can also take a closer look into the nuanced experiences of actors that constitute EL networks. These studies should explore the experiences of EL aides and bilingual parent liaisons as they were found to be key connectors between the school and the community through responses from this study. Because the EL network extends beyond the school and into the community, future studies should also examine the network interactions of EL community members and families as well. The literature also suggests that there may be dissonance between EL and general education teachers, especially around professional status and responsibility for teaching ELs (Arkoudis, 2006; Creese, 2002). However, this study found that teachers may hold positions that require them to teach both general education and EL students. Further examination of individuals that hold these positions and their network activity may add nuance to perspectives on EL responsibility and professional status between general education and teachers of ELs. Investigating these areas would build on the findings of this dissertation and continue to map the terrain of EL networks in wider contexts.

The early morning air kept our backs straight. It was much colder than we were accustomed to. The wind swept across our faces as we stood huddled together on the waterfront, waiting for our turn to enter the old dock house. There were others with us too. We were all from different places, but a kind of weary excitement bonded us together for this experience we were about to share.

Some were hesitant to board the vessel, understandably so as white capped waves thrashed the hull of our boat producing a loud booming that vibrated through our bones as we walked across the undulating gangway. But soon enough we were all on board and as the engine grumbled and the bow split the frigid Hudson, we floated further and further away from Battery Park. We floated past Ellis Island, and the wonder increased. We floated further on and the wonder increased. The small green figure slowly grew in size, and the wonder increased. Then finally, we reached her splendor; draped in glorious verdigris, golden flame in hand, with this engraved on her pedestal:

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!" (Lazarus, 1883)

For the past six years, I have been blessed with the opportunity to take groups of 8th grade students to the east coast. We go to Washington D.C., Philadelphia, and Gettysburg. Aligning U.S. history and literature, we travel around to various sites learning about the beginnings of what would emerge as the United States of America. And on our final day, we end in New York. We take a ferry boat across the Hudson to spend some time on Liberty Island. Students stroll along and take selfies with one of the most iconic national monuments in the country.

But what does the Statue of Liberty represent? Historically, the statue has been a point of polarization, especially when it comes to perspectives on immigration. Proponents of immigration often point to Emma Lazarus's (1883) poem "The New Colossus", emblazoned in bronze on its pedestal, as a perennial reminder for America's commitment to welcoming immigrants with open arms. On the other hand, through a nativist lens, the statue has also been seen as a symbol of a nation under threat from incoming foreigners (National Park Service, 2015). Given these perspectives, the statue "comes into focus as a mirror that reflects both America's aspirations and her tragic flaws" (Lemke, 2011, p. 212).

More recently, the current presidential administration under Donald Trump has supported the latter, nativist rhetoric through proposing immigration reforms, such as the Reforming American Immigration for Strong Employment (RAISE) ACT, that prioritize the entry of highly skilled, English-speaking immigrants. Stephen Miller, a top presidential advisor, provided this rationale for the legislation:

> And so, again, we're ending unskilled chain migration, but we're also making sure that the great inventors of the world, the great scientists of the world, that people who have the next great piece of technology can come into the United States and compete in a

> competitive application process, a points-based system that makes sense in the year 2017. (CNN, 2017)

Reforms like these restrict immigration opportunities to a privileged, English-speaking elite, and is a veritable nod to the systems of oppression that maintain social stratification in the United States and bring to mind visages of linguicism akin to the days of slavery in the south or Native American boarding schools during western expansion.

Though overt discrimination against linguistic minorities has checkered the history of the United States, the current milieu is much better than it was before. And while discrimination against immigrants and linguistic minorities persists, schools still have the responsibility to provide the best education possible for all students. The reasons for why and how people find themselves in America are as distinct as the individuals themselves. But these reasons are not the focus of this dissertation. Rather, this dissertation seeks to follow in the footsteps of research that explores avenues for providing opportunities for all students to succeed through social justice and equity. At its root, this dissertation was about connection. It provided valuable insights into the experiences of individuals in their work in progress, and left much more to be explored in the ways in which people come together to support ELs.

As long as we breathe, we all possess inalienable rights. And with those rights comes the freedom to choose. At times, however, certain barriers impede these freedoms and individuals are subject to outcomes that others have chosen for them. Too many times these outcomes limit the potential of cultural and linguistic minorities to achieve success. It is my hope that this work adds to a body of literature that breaks down these walls, to work towards strong and positive community connections that strengthen not only portions of society, but society as a whole.

Appendix

University of California, San Diego
Consent to Act as a Research Subject

Exploring the ELD Social Network

Informed Consent Form

Who is conducting the project, why you have been asked to participate, how you were selected, and what is the approximate number of participants in the project?

Jonathan B. Penuliar, a doctoral student in education at UCSD and CSUSM, is conducting a project to find out more about social interactions in schools to better understand the education of English learners. You have been asked to participate in this study because you are a teacher, administrator, or instructional aide. You have been selected because you are currently listed as a staff member affiliated with your school. There will be approximately 200 participants in this study.

Why is this project being done?
The purpose of this project is to (1) identify and map English learner-related communication and information networks present in teachers, administrators, and instructional aides within schools, and (2) better understand what network conditions may predict improvement in the education of English learners

What will happen to you in this project and which procedures are standard of care and which are experimental?

If you agree to be in this project, you will complete an online survey that includes questions about your demographic characteristics, academic background, and current work context, as well as questions about who you go to for advice or information related to the education of English learners.

How much time will each project procedure take, what is your total time commitment, and how long will the project last?
It will take you approximately 20 minutes to complete the survey.

What risks are associated with this project?
Participation in this project may involve some added risks or discomforts. These include the following:
1. A potential for the loss of confidentiality. However, no data about any individual participant or specific team will be reported to any organization. The only individual who will be able to see your survey responses and have access to the data will be the researcher conducting this project (Jonathan B. Penuliar). All survey data will be stored on secure servers with password protection. In addition, individuals' names and other identifiers will be removed from the data files and replaced with random numerical identifiers.

2. You may become bored or fatigued during the survey in which case you can just stop the survey and return later or stop the survey without returning later.

What are the alternatives to participating in this project?
The alternative to participation in this project is not to participate.

What benefits can be reasonably expected?
There may or may not be any direct benefit to you from participating this project. However, your participation will provide valuable information to understanding the education of English learners.

Can you choose to not participate or withdraw from the project without penalty or loss of benefits?
Participation in research is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw or refuse to answer specific questions on a survey at any time without penalty. If you decide that you no longer wish to continue in this project, please inform the researcher, Jonathan B. Penuliar, jpenulia@ucsd.edu, (858) 663-4844. You will be told if any important new information is found during the course of this project that may affect your wanting to continue.

Can you be withdrawn from the project without your consent?
Yes, the researcher may remove you from the project without your consent if the researcher feels it is in your best interest or the best interest of the project.

Will you be compensated for participating in this project?
There is no direct compensation to you for participating in the project.

Are there any costs associated with participating in this project?
There will be no cost to you for participating in this project.

What if you are injured as a direct result of being in this project?
This project does not involve procedures that could potential cause physical and psychological injury.

Who can you call if you have questions?
You have the right to ask questions of the researcher without penalty (either in person, on the telephone, or via e-mail) and you may leave blank any survey questions you do not wish to answer for any reason. Further, you have the right to withdraw consent and discontinue participation at any time, including after completion of any of the survey, without penalty. To withdraw from the project, you may contact Jonathan B. Penuliar at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or jpenulia@ucsd.edu. You may call the Human Research Protections Program Office at (858) 246-4777 to inquire about your rights as a research subject or to report research-related problems.

By selecting this option, I acknowledge that I have read the consent form and agree to participate in the research study.

I do NOT agree to participate.

Survey Part 1

What is your age?

18-24 years old
25-34 years old
35-44 years old
45-54 years old
55-64 years old
65-74 years old
75 years or older

To which gender identity do you most identify?

Female
Male
Transgender Female
Transgender Male

Gender Variant/Non-Conforming

Other:

Decline to State

Please indicate your race/ethnicity. (Select all that apply.)

American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian

Black or African American

Hispanic or Latino/a

Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

White or European-American

Other:

What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? If currently enrolled, highest degree received.

No schooling completed

Some high school, no diploma

High school graduate, diploma or the equivalent (for example: GED)

Some college credit, no degree

Trade/technical/vocational training

Associate degree (e.g. AA, AS)

Bachelor's degree (e.g. BA, BS)

Master's degree (e.g. MA, MS, MEd)

Professional degree (e.g. MD, DDS, DVM)

Doctorate degree (e.g. PhD, EdD)

What was your major field of study for the bachelor's degree? (Select all that apply.)

Not Applicable: I do not hold a bachelor's degree.

Elementary education

Middle school education

Secondary education Special education

World language education

Other discipline (e.g., ELA, science, mathematics, social sciences, etc.):

If applicable, what was your major field of study for the highest degree you hold beyond a bachelor's degree?

Not Applicable: I do not hold a bachelor's degree.

Elementary education

ESL/Second language acquisition

Middle school education

Secondary education Special education
Secondary education
World language education
Other discipline (e.g., ELA, science, mathematics, social sciences, etc.):

What certifications or endorsements do you hold or have you held in the past? (Select all that apply.)

Not Applicable
Elementary/early childhood certification
ESL certification
Middle grades certification--Please list content area:
Principal certification
Reading specialist certification
Secondary certification -- Please list content area:
Special education certification
Other:

Please estimate the total number of courses you have taken at the undergraduate and/or graduate level in each of the following areas.

ELL/ESL theory or methods
Special education theory or methods
Reading/literacy theory or methods
Science education theory or methods
Applied linguistics

Please rate your proficiency in English, Spanish, and any other language(s).
Not at all Proficient (0) Highly Proficient (6)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6
English
Spanish
Other:
Other:

Including this year, how many years have you worked as a teacher?

.

Including this year, how many years have you worked at this school?

.

Including this year, how many years have you been assigned to your current position at this school?

.

Including this year, how many years have you worked with ELLs?

.

Please select the position that best describes your primary role. (Select one.)

I am the principal, assistant principal, or other school administrator.

I am a general education or content area teacher (English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies).

I am a physical education, art, or music teacher.

I am an ESL teacher.

I am a special education teacher (including speech therapy and gifted education).

I am a reading specialist.

I am a school counselor.

I am a paraprofessional.

I am a bilingual liaison.

Other:

Which statement best describes your teaching role?

I instruct several classes of students in one or more subjects (specialized content instruction).

I instruct the same group of students all or most of the day in multiple subjects (self-contained instruction).

I instruct selected students in specific skills or to address specific needs (pull-out or push-in
instruction).

What grade(s) do you teach this school year? (Select all that apply.)

6th Grade

7th Grade

8th Grade

None of the Above

What subjects are you assigned to teach this school year? (Select all that apply.)

English Language Arts

History/Social Studies

Mathematics

Science

Other (Please specify):

How many professional development opportunities have you attended this year?

1
2
3
4 or more

How many professional development opportunities have you attended this year that included information regarding English learners?

1
2
3
4 or more

Survey Part 2

The next set of items includes questions about your school's culture and climate.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding *teachers* in your school.

Staff members in this school trust each other

Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neither disagree nor agree
Agree
Strongly Agree

It's okay in this school to discuss feelings, worries, and frustrations with other teachers.

Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neither disagree nor agree
Agree
Strongly Agree

Teachers respect other teachers who take the lead in school improvement efforts.

Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neither disagree nor agree
Agree
Strongly Agree

Teachers at this school respect those colleagues who are experts at their craft.

Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neither disagree nor agree
Agree
Strongly Agree

Teachers at this school really care about each other.

Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neither disagree nor agree
Agree
Strongly Agree

Please indicate about how often you do the following with other teachers in this school.

Share ideas on teaching.

Never
A few times throughout the year
A few times per month
1-2 times per week
More than twice per week

Discuss what you/they learned at a workshop or conference.

Never
A few times throughout the year
A few times per month

1-2 times per week
More than twice per week

Share and discuss research on effective teaching methods.

Never
A few times throughout the year
A few times per month
1-2 times per week
More than twice per week

Explore new teaching approaches for underperforming students.

Never
A few times throughout the year
A few times per month
1-2 times per week
More than twice per week

Analyze samples of work done by your students.

Never
A few times throughout the year
A few times per month
1-2 times per week
More than twice per week

Develop teaching materials or activities for particular classes.

Never
A few times throughout the year
A few times per month
1-2 times per week
More than twice per week

Discuss student assessment data to make decisions about instruction.

Never
A few times throughout the year
A few times per month
1-2 times per week
More than twice per week

Survey Part 3

ELD Networks: The next set of questions ask about to whom at your school you turn for advice and information regarding teaching English learners. We will use these data to understand how the staff in your school learn from one another. While you will be asked to select specific people, everyone listed will be assigned an ID number, and their names will never be used in datasets or reports.

During this school year, to which of the following people have you turned for instructional support regarding English learners? Please consider advice and information related to curriculum, teaching, or student learning.

(List completed after IRB approval)

Closing

We genuinely appreciate your time for sharing your opinions with us.

Would you be willing to participate in a follow-up conversation with a member of the research team regarding your responses?

Yes

No

Please include your name and contact information so a member of the research team can contact you at a later time.

First and Last Name

Email Address

Phone Number

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